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THE

# HISTORY

OF

# THE ANGLO-SAXONS,

FROM

THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE

NORMAN CONQUEST.

BY SHARON TURNER, F.A.S. & R.A.S.L.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE

# HISTORY

OF THE

# ANGLO-SAXONS.

## BOOK VII.

*Of the* MANNERS *of the* ANGLO-SAXONS *after their* OCCUPATION *of* ENGLAND.

### CHAPTER I.

*On their Infancy, Childhood, and Names.*

CHAP. I.

IN the Appendix to the first volume of this history, we have described the Saxons as they were on the continent, before they possessed themselves of the south part of Britain, during the fifth and sixth centuries; and we may remark, that the human character has seldom displayed qualities more inauspicious to the improvement of intellect or of moral character. When they first landed, they were bands of fierce, ignorant, idolatrous, and superstitious pirates, enthusiastically courageous, but habitually cruel. Yet from such ancestors a nation has, in the course of twelve centuries, been formed, which, inferior to none in every moral and intellectual merit, is superior to every other in the love and possession of useful liberty: a nation which cultivates with equal success

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the elegancies of art, the ingenious labours of industry, the energies of war, the researches of science, and the richest productions of genius.

This improved state has been slowly attained under the discipline of very diversified events. The first gradation of the happy progress was effected during that period, which it is the object of this work to elucidate.

The destruction of the Roman Empire of the West by the German nations has been usually lamented as a barbarization of the human mind; a period of misery, darkness, and ruin; as a replunging of society into the savage chaos from which it had so slowly escaped, and from which through increased evils and obstacles, it had again to emerge. This view of the political and moral phenomena of this remarkable epoch is not correct. It suits neither the true incidents that preceded or accompanied, nor those which followed this mighty revolution. And our notions of the course of human affairs have been made more confused and unscientific by this exaggerated declamation, and by the inaccurate perceptions which have occasioned it.

The conquest and partition of the Western Roman Empire by the Nomadic nations of Germany was, in fact, a new and beneficial re-casting of human society in all its classes, functions, manners, and pursuits. The civilisation of mankind had been carried in the previous Roman world to the fullest extent to which the then existing means of human improvement could be urged. That this had long been stationary, and for some time retrograding, the philosophical examiner into the government, literature, religion, public habits, and private morals of the Roman Empire, will, if he make his researches sufficiently minute and extensive, be satisfactorily convinced. Hence, either the progress of mankind must have been stopped, and their corrupting civilisation have stagnated or feebly rolled on towards its own barbarization, or some extensive

revolution must have broken up the existing system of universal degeneracy, and begun a new career of moral agency and social melioration. The fact is incontestable that this latter state has been the result of the irruptions and established kingdoms of the Teutonic tribes; and this visible consequence of their great movement should terminate our dark and querulous descriptions of this momentous period, which suit rather the age and mind of a doleful Gildas than of an enlightened student of history of the nineteenth century.

That the invasions of the Roman Empire by the warlike tribes of the North were attended with great sufferings to mankind at the time of their occurrence is strictly true; but these calamities were not greater than those which all the wars of the ancient world had produced to almost every people in whose territory they had been waged. The hostilities of Rome against Carthage, against Gaul under Cæsar, and against Germany from the time of Drusus to the days of Stilicho, not to mention many others, had been as fatal to the Carthaginians, Gauls, and Germans, as those of the fierce invaders of the fourth and fifth centuries were to the then population of the debased Western Empire. The destruction of human life and comfort in the regions attacked were the same when the Romans invaded the barbarians, as when the latter retaliated their aggressions. War itself must cease, from the increasing wisdom and virtue of mankind, before such calamities will disappear; but it is consolatory to human reason to observe, that, while the moral imperfections of the world operate to continue it, a benevolent order of things compels even its mischiefs to produce good; and, if this view of such periods be not taken, we shall never attain the discernment of the true philosophy of the moral government of the world.

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That the settlements of the German kingdoms in the Roman Empire were not so calamitous to the world as so many have supposed, is most forcibly implied by the intimations, before mentioned, from Salvian, that many Romans emigrated from their own parental empire to place themselves under the barbaric governments, that they might escape the oppressions of the Roman collectors of the imperial taxations. The barbaric establishments were a new order of things in Europe, but cannot have been so prolific of misery to mankind as we have hitherto too gratuitously assumed; when, notwithstanding the discouragement of new languages and institutions, and ruder habits, they were preferred by many to the country which was their birth-place, which had been so long consecrated by deserved fame, and whose feelings, mind, and social manners, were congenial to their own.

The invasions of the German nations destroyed the ancient governments, and political and legal systems of the Roman Empire in the provinces in which they established themselves; and dispossessed the former proprietors of their territorial property. A new set of land-owners was diffused over every country, with new forms of government, new principles, and new laws, new religious disciplines and hierarchies, with many new tenets and practices. A new literature, and new manners, all productive of great improvements, in every part superseded the old, and gave to Europe a new face, and to every class of society a new life and spirit. In the Anglo-Saxon settlements in Britain all these effects were displayed with the most beneficial consequences; and we will endeavour to delineate them as clearly as the distance of time, and the imperfections of our remaining documents, will permit us to discern them.

The Anglo-Saxons must have been materially im-

proved in their manners and mental associations by the civilisation to which Britain had attained at the time of their invasion, from the Roman government and intercourse, and which has been alluded to in the former part of this work.

The first great change in the Anglo-Saxons appeared in the discontinuance of their piracies. They ceased to be the ferocious spoilers of the ocean and its coasts; they became land-owners, agriculturists, and industrious citizens; they seized and divided the acquisitions of British affluence, and made the commonalty of the island their slaves. Their war-leaders became territorial chiefs; and the conflicts of capricious and sanguinary robbery were exchanged for the possession and inheritance of property in its various sorts; for trades and manufactures, for useful luxuries, peaceful industry, and domestic comfort.

We will proceed to consider them as they displayed their manners and customs during their occupation of England, and before the Norman conquest introduced new institutions.

Their tenderest and most helpless years were under the care of females. The gratitude of Edgar to his nurse appears, from his rewarding with grants of land the noble lady, wife of an ealdorman, who had nursed and educated him with maternal attention.[1] This was not unusual: Ethelstan, an Anglo-Saxon ætheling, says in his will, "I give to Alfswythe, my foster-mother, for her great deservingness, the lands of Wertune, that I bought of my father for two hundred and fifty mancusa of gold by weight."[2]

They had infant baptism: hence the Saxon homily says, "though the cild for youth may not speak when men baptize it."[3] They were enjoined to baptize their

[1] Hist. Rames. 3 Gale, x. Script. 387. 405.
[2] Sax. Dict. App.
[3] Wanley, Catal. Sax. p. 196.

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children within thirty days after birth.[4] They baptized by immersion; for when Ethelred was plunged in, the royal infant disgraced himself. They used the cradle.[5] It is mentioned in the laws, of a person of the dignity of a gesithcund man, that when he travelled he might have with him his gerefas, his smith, and his child's nurse.[6] Kings sometimes stood as godfathers; and their laws so venerated this relationship, as to establish peculiar provisions to punish the man who slew another's godson or godfather.[7] On the death of the father, the children were ordered to remain under the care of the mother, who was to provide them with sustenance; for this she was to be allowed six shillings, a cow in summer, and an ox in winter; but his relations were to occupy the frum-stol, the head seat, until the boy became of age.[8]

The Northmen were in the habit of exposing their children. The Anglo-Saxons seem not to have been unacquainted with this inhumanity; as one of the laws of Ina provides, that for the fostering of a foundling six shillings should be allowed the first year, twelve the next, thirty the third, and afterwards according to his wlite, or his personal appearance and beauty.[9]

Bede mentions, that their period of infancy ended with the seventh year, and that the first year of their childhood began with the eighth.[10] In the early stage he exhibits the person of whom he speaks as amusing himself with his play-fellows in the tricks and sports of his age, but as excelling in his dexterity, and in his power of pursuing them without fatigue.[11] It is

[4] Wilkins, Leg. Anglo-Sax. p. 14.
[5] Tha cild the læg on tham cnaðele, ibid. p. 145.
[6] Wilkins, p. 25.
[7] Ibid. p. 26.
[8] Wilkins, p. 20.
[9] Ibid. p. 19.*
[10] Bede Vit. Cuthb. c. i. p. 229.
[11] Bede, ibid.

* At Repton, where the kings of Mercia had a palace, and in the monastery of which place many were buried, a stone coffin was found, containing a skeleton nine feet long. It was surrounded with an hundred other skeletons of a common size. Phil. Trans. v. xxxv. art. 9.

hardly worth a line to remark, that the Anglo-Saxon child must have resembled every other; restless activity without an object, sport without reasoning, grief without impression, and caprice without affectation, are the usual characteristics of our earliest years, in every age and climate

As the Anglo-Saxons were not a literary people, it is natural that their childish occupations should be the exercises of muscular agility. Leaping, running, wrestling, and every contention and contortion of limb which love of play or emulation could excite, were their favourite sports. Bede describes his hero as boasting of his superior dexterity, and as joining with no small crowd of boys in their accustomed wrestlings in a field; where, as usual, he says, they writhed their limbs in various, but unnatural flexures.[12]

The names of the Anglo-Saxons were imposed, as with us, in their infancy, by their parents. In several charters it is mentioned, that the persons therein alluded to had been called from their cradles by the names expressed; and which they had received, "not from accident," but from the will of "their parents."[13]

Their names seem to have been frequently compound words, rather expressive of caprice than of appropriate meaning. The appellation of Mucil, "large," which Alfred's wife's father bore[14], may have been suggested by the size of the new-born infant; as hwithyse, "the white boy," or Egbert, "bright eye," might have been imposed from some peculiar appearance. But the following names, when considered as applied first in infancy, appear to be as fantastic, and as much the effusions of vanity, as the lofty names so dear to modern parents:

[12] Bede, Vit. Cuthb. c. i. p. 230. [13] MS. Claud. B. vi. p. 34. et 62., &c.
[14] Asser, p. 19.

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| | |
|---|---|
| Æthelwulf, | the noble wolf. |
| Berhtwulf, | the illustrious wolf. |
| Eadwulf, | the prosperous wolf. |
| Ealdwulf, | the old wolf. |
| Æthelwyn, | noble in battle, or the noble joy. |
| Eadric, | happy and rich. |
| Ælfred, | an elf in council. |
| Hundberht, | the illustrious hound. |
| Heardberht, | the illustrious protector. |
| Æthelheard, | the noble protector. |
| Sigered, | victorious counsel. |
| Sigeric, | victorious and rich. |
| Æthelred, | noble in council. |
| Eadmund, | the prosperous patron. |
| Eadwin, | prosperous in battle. |
| Ælfheag, | tall as an elf. |
| Dunstan, | the mountain-stone. |
| Æthelbald, | noble and bold. |
| Wulfric, | powerful as a wolf. |
| Eadward, | the prosperous guardian. |
| Ethelstan, | the noble rock, |
| Ethelbert, | noble and illustrious |

Of the female names, the meaning is more applicable, and sometimes displays better taste. We give the following as specimens, taken as they occurred:

| | |
|---|---|
| Æthelswytha, | very noble. |
| Selethrytha, | a good threatener. |
| Editha, | the blessed gift. |
| Elfhild, | the elf of battle. |
| Beage, | the bracelet. |
| Ethelfritha, | noble and powerful. |
| Adeleve, | the noble wife. |
| Eadburh, | the happy pledge. |
| Heaburge, | tall as a tower. |
| Eadfled, | the happy pregnancy. |
| Adelfleda, | the noble pregnancy. |
| Ælfgiva, | the elf favor. |
| Eadgifa, | the happy gift. |
| Æthelgifa, | the noble gift. |
| Wynfreda, | the peace of man. |
| Æthelhild, | the noble war-goddess. |
| Ælfthrythe, | threatening as an elf. |

In the will of a Dux Ælfred, written 888, we have the following names, chiefly of priests and monks who witnessed it:

| | |
|---|---|
| Beornhelm, | the helmet of the nobles. |
| Eardwulf, | the wolf of the province. |
| Werburg, | the hedge of the city. |
| Sigfred, | the peace of victory. |
| Beonheah, | the soaring bee. |
| Beagstan, | the bracelet stone. |
| Wulfheah, | the tall wolf. |
| Beornoth, | the noble's oath. |
| Wealdhelm, | the ruling helmet. |
| Wine, | the dear one. |
| Sæfreth, | the freedom of the sea. |
| Ceolmund, | the protecting ship. |
| Eadwald, | the prosperous governor. |
| Sigwulf, | the victorious wolf. |

We will subjoin a few specimens of the names prevailing in the same families:

A father and three daughters:

| | |
|---|---|
| Dudda, | the family stem. |
| Deorwyn, | dear to man, or the precious joy. |
| Deorswythe, | very dear. |
| Golde, | golden.[15] |

A father and his four sons:

| | |
|---|---|
| Æthelwyn, | the noble joy. |
| Æthelwold, | the noble governor. |
| Alfwold, | the ruling elf. |
| Athelsin, | always noble. |
| Æthelwyn. | |

A brother and two sisters:

| | |
|---|---|
| Leonric, | the lion of the kingdom. |
| Adelfleda. | |
| Adeleve, | the noble wife. |

A husband, wife, and daughter:

| | |
|---|---|
| Ridda, | the horseman. |
| Bugega, | nimble as a hind. |
| Heaburge. | |

To which we may add,

Ethelwulph and his four sons:

Ethelbald,
Ethelbert,
Ethelred,
Alfred.

[15] The state of this family is thus mentioned in a Saxon MS.: "Dudda was a husbandman in Hæthfelda; and he had three daughters: one was called Deorwyn; the other Deorswythe; and the third Golde. Wullaf, in Hæthfelda, hath Deorwyn for his wife; and Ælfstan, at Kingawyrth, hath Deorwythe; and Ealhstan, the brother of Ælfstan, married Golde." Cott. MS. Tib. B. 5.

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It has been a subject of discussion, whether the Anglo-Saxons used surnames. There can be no question that many were distinguished by appellations added to their original, or Christian names. Thus we find a person called Wulfsic se blaca, or the pale; Thurceles hwitan, or the white; others Æthelwerde Stameran, and Godwine Dreflan. Sometimes a person is designated from his habitation, as Ælfric at Bertune; Leonmære at Biggrafan. Very often the addition expresses the name of his father, as Ælfgare Ælfan suna, Ælmær Ælfrices suna, Sired Ælfrides suna, Godwine Wolfnothes suna, or more shortly Wulfrig Madding; Badenoth Beotting.[16] The office, trade, affinity, or possession, is frequently applied to distinguish the individuals mentioned in the charters: as Leofwine Ealdorman, Sweigen Scyldwirtha, Eadwig, his mæg, Ægelpig munuc, Osword preost, Leowine se Canon, Heording gerefa, and such like.[17] But although it is certain that such additional appellations were occasionally used by the Anglo-Saxons, yet they appear to have been but personal distinctions, and not to have been appropriated by them as family names, in the manner of surnames with us. In the progress of civilisation, the convenience of a permanent family

[16] It is a remarkable peculiarity in some of the Mahomedan countries, and is universal in Syria, and nearly so in Arabia, that instead of the child being called from his parents, as among the Anglo-Saxons and the Northerns, with the addition of son, like our Richard-son, William-son, &c.; both the Eastern parents take their name from their *first-born* son. Thus the paternal person assumes the appellation of abu-Michael, or the father of Michael, because his eldest son received that name. For the same reason the maternal parent is styled om-Suleyman, the mother of Solomon. Jowett's Researches. Hence, whenever we meet with the common prefix of abu, as abu-bekr, abu-taleb, &c., it always means the father of the son whose name follows the abu. This fact may lead us to consider the system of primogeniture as not merely a civil institution. It seems to have had an origin still more venerated, for we cannot avoid recollecting the ordination in Exodus, that the first-born should be considered as consecrated to God. (Exod. xiii. 2.); nor that promise of the Messiah descending from Abraham, which gave such importance among all his posterity, and, therefore, among its Arabian branch, to the eldest or first-born son. Primogeniture, as a principle or revered feeling of the mind, may in this view be supposed to have come to us from the East, with the earliest migration of our forefathers from it.

[17] See Hickes's Dissert. Epist. p. 22—25.

denomination was so generally felt as to occasion the adoption of the custom. It is probable that the first permanent surnames were the appellations of the places of birth, or residence, of a favourite ancestor. To these the caprice of individual choice or popular fancy, the hereditary pursuit of peculiar trades, and the continued possession of certain offices, added many others, especially in towns. But this custom of appropriating a permanent appellation to particular families, became established in the period which succeeded the Norman conquest.[18]

The power of the Anglo-Saxon parent over his child was limited; or at least the clergy, as soon as Christianity was introduced, began to confine it. Theodore, the second archbishop of Canterbury, in 668, allowed that a father, if compelled by necessity, might deliver up his son to a state of servitude, that is, slavery, without the child's consent. But he declared that a boy of fifteen might make himself a monk, and a girl of sixteen or seventeen might choose a religious life. Up to the age of fifteen the father might marry his daughter as he pleased; but after fifteen, he was forbidden to dispose of her against her will.[19]

[18] And yet one Saxon MS. seems to express an actual surname, Hatte. Thus, "Hwita *Hatte* was a keeper of bees in Hæthfelda; and Tate *Hatte*, his daughter, was the mother of Wulfsige, the shooter; and Lulle *Hatte*, the sister of Wulfsige, Hehstan had for his wife in Wealadene. Wifus, and Dunne, and Seoloce, were born in Hæthfelda.

"Duding *Hatte*, the son of Wifus, is settled at Wealadene; and Ceolmund *Hatte*, the son of Dunne, is also settled there; and Æthelean *Hatte*, the son of Seoloce, is also there; and Tate *Hatte*, the sister of Cenwald, Mæg hath for his wife at Weligan; and Ealdelm, the son of Herethrythe, married the daughter of Tate. Werlaf *Hatte*, the father of Werstan, was the rightful possessor of Hæthfelda," &c. Cott. MS. Tib. B. 6.—The above is a literal translation.

[19] Cæpitula Theodore ap. D'Acheri Spicel. vol. i. p. 489.

## CHAP. II.

*Their Education.*

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We cannot detail the particular course of education by which the Anglo-Saxons conducted their children to maturity, but some information may be gleaned. Their society was divided into two orders of men, laymen and ecclesiastics. Among the latter as much provision was made for intellectual improvement, as the general darkness of the period would allow. The laity were more contented with ignorance; and neglecting the mind, of whose powers and nature they knew nothing, they laboured to increase the hardihood and agility of the body, and the intrepidity, perhaps the fierceness, of the spirit.

Some men, rising above the level of their age, endeavoured to recommend the use of schools. Thus Sigebert, in the seventh century, having enlarged his mind during his exile in France, as soon as he regained the East Anglian throne, established a school in his dominions for youth to be instructed in learning.[1] So we find in Alfred's time, and under his improving auspices, most of the noble, and many of the inferior orders, were put under the care of masters, with whom they learnt both Latin and Saxon books, and also writing, that "before they cultivated the arts adapted to manly strength, like hunting, and such others as suited the noble, they might make themselves acquainted with liberal knowledge." Hence Edward and Ælfthrythe are stated by Asser to have stu-

[1] Bede.

diously learnt Psalms and Saxon books, and chiefly Saxon poetry.[2] But among the laity, these were transient gleams of intellectual sunshine, neither general nor permanent. The great and powerful undervalued knowlege; hence Alfred's brothers did not offer to attain the faculty of reading which he was tempted to acquire.[3] Hence, even kings state in their charters, that they signed with the cross, because they were unable to write[4]; and hence so many of Alfred's earls, gerefas, and thegns, who had been illiterate all their lives, were compelled by his wise severity to learn in their mature age, that they might not discharge their duties with such shameful insufficiency. It is mentioned on this occasion, that those who from age or want of capacity could not learn to read themselves, were obliged to have their son, kinsman, or, if they had none, one of their servants, taught, that they might at least be read to, and be rescued from the total ignorance with which they had so long been satisfied. Asser expresses the great lamentations of these well-born, but untaught men, that they had not studied such things in their youth.[5] Nothing can more strongly display the general want of even that degree of education which our poorest charity-children receive, than these circumstances.

The clergy were the preceptors of those who sought to learn; and though Alfred tells us how few even of these could read, yet our history of the Anglo-Saxon literature will show some very brilliant exceptions. Such as they were, however, to them the moral and intellectual education of the age was entrusted. Thus Aldhem's father, a prince, put him under the tuition of the Abbot Adrian.[6] Thus the Irish monk Maildulf,

[2] Asser.

[3] Ibid.

[4] In a MS. charter of Wihtred, in the possession of the late Mr. Astle, to the king's mark was added, "ad cujus confirmationem pro ignorantia literarum."

[5] Asser.

[6] Malmsb. 3 Gale, 338.

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who settled at Malmsbury, and was well skilled in Greek and Latin, took scholars to earn subsistence.[7] From a passage in the biographer of Wilfrid, we learn that children, who afterwards pursued the paths of ambition, received, in the first part of their lives, instruction from ecclesiastics. He says of Wilfrid, a bishop in the eighth century, "Princes and noblemen sent their children to him to be brought up, that they might be dedicated to God, if they should choose it; or that, when full grown, he might present them in armour to the king, if they preferred it."[8]

When they reached the age of fourteen, the aspiring, or the better conditioned, prepared themselves for arms. It was after completing his thirteenth year that Wilfrid, who had not then decided on a religious life, began to think of quitting the paternal roof. He obtained such arms, horses, and garments for himself and his boys, as were necessary to enable him to present himself to the royal notice. With these he travelled till he reached the queen of the province. He met there some of the nobles at her court, whom he had attended at his father's house. They praised him, and introduced him to the queen, by whom he was graciously received. As he afterwards chose the path of devotion, she recommended him to one of the nobles who accompanied the king, but who was induced, by the pressure of a paralytic disease, to exchange the court for the cloister.[9]

The Anglo-Saxons distinguish the period between childhood and manhood by the term cnihthade, knighthood. It is stated in Ina's laws, "that a cniht of ten winters old might give evidence;"[10] and Bede's expression, of a boy about eight years old, is trans-

[7] Malmsb. 3 Gale, 338.
[8] Eddius, p. 62.
[9] Eddius, p. 44.
[10] Wilkins, Leg. p. 16.

lated by Alfred, "pæȝ eahta ȝintȝa cniht."[11] A king also mentions of a circumstance, that he saw it cniht wesende, being a cniht, or while a boy.[12] It will be considered in another place how far the term bore the meaning of chivalry among the Anglo-Saxons. A daughter was under the power of her parents till the age of thirteen or fourteen, when she had the disposal of her person herself: at fifteen, a son had the right of choosing his path of life, and might then become a monk, but not before.[13]

In this season of cnihthood, or youth, we find them striving to excel each other at a horse-race. A person in Bede describes himself as one of a party, who on their journey came to a spacious plain, adapted to a horse-course. The young men were desirous to prove their horses in the greater course, or, as the Saxon translator expresses it, that we might run and try which had the swiftest horse. The individual spoken of at last joined them; but his animated horse, attempting to clear a concavity in the way, by a violent leap the youth was thrown senseless against a stone, and with difficulty brought to life.[14]

The Saxon youth seem to have been accustomed to habits of docility and obedience. The word cniht was also used to express a servant[15], and Wilfrid is characterised as having in his youth attentively ministered to all his father's visitors, whether royal attendants or their servants.[16]

The education of the Saxons was much assisted by the emigration or visits of Irish ecclesiastics. We have mentioned Maildulf at Malmsbury; it is also intimated, in Dunstan's life, that some Irishmen had settled at Glastonbury, whose books Dunstan diligently studied. This great but ambitious man was

[11] Bede, lib. v. c. 18. Alf. Transl. 635.
[12] Bede. Alf. Transl. p. 518.
[13] 1 Wilk. Concil. 130.
[14] Bede, lib. v. c. 6.
[15] Gen. xxiv. 65. Luke, xii. 45.
[16] Eddius, p. 44.

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arraigned in his youth for studying the vain songs of his Pagan ancestors, and the frivolous charms of histories.[17]

After the prevalence of Christianity, a portion of the youth was taken into the monasteries. We have a description, in Saxon, of the employment of the boys there. One of these, in answer to the question, "What have you done to-day?" says,—

"Many things. When I heard the knell, I rose from my bed and went to church, and sang the song for before-day with the brethren, and afterwards of All Saints, and, at the dawn of day, the song of praise. After these, I said the first and seventh Psalms, with the litany and first mass. Afterwards, before noon, we did the mass for the day, and after this, at mid-day, we sang, and ate, and drank, and slept, and again we rose and sang the noon, and now we are here before thee, ready to hear what thou shalt say to us."

The interrogation proceeds:

"When will ye sing the evening or the night song?" "When it is time."—"Wert thou flogged to-day?" "No."—"No?" "Every one knows whether he has been flogged to-day or not."—"Where do you sleep?" "In the sleeping room with the brethren."—"Who rouses you to the song before day?" "Sometimes I hear the knell and rise: sometimes my master wakes me, sternly, with his rod."

On being questioned why they learnt so industriously, he is made to reply,

"Because we would not be like the stupid animals, who know nothing but their grass and water."[18]

That they used personal castigation in their education is also intimated by Alcuin[19], who, in the preface to his Dialectica, adds a warm exhortation to his young contemporaries to improve themselves by education.

[17] MS. Cleop. B. 13.

[18] MS. Tib. A. 3.

[19] Thus Alcuin:—"As scourges teach children to learn the ornament of wisdom, and to accustom themselves to good manners." p. 1631. He says to the brethren of York Minster, where he was educated: "You cherished the weak mind of my infancy with maternal affection. You sustained my wanton day of childhood with pious patience. You brought me to the perfect age of manhood by the *disciplines of paternal castigation*, and confirmed my mind by the erudition of sacred instruction." p. 1627.

"O ye, who enjoy the youthful age, so fitted for your lessons! Learn. Be docile. Lose not the day in idle things. The passing hour, like the wave, never returns again. Let your early years flourish with the study of the virtues, that your age may shine with great honours. Use these happy days. Learn, while young, the art of eloquence, that you may be a safeguard and defender of those whom you value. Acquire the conduct and manners so beautiful in youth, and your name will become celebrated through the world. But as I wish you not to be sluggish; so neither be proud. I worship the recesses of the devout and humble breast." Oper. p. 1353.

We have a short sketch of the better kind of intellectual education in Alcuin's description of the studies which, after he was invited from England by Charlemagne, he superintended at Tours. It is not expressed in the best taste, but it shows the studies that were valued in the eighth century. He writes to the emperor:—

"According to your exhortations and kind wish, I endeavour to administer, in the schools of St. Martin, to some the honey of the Sacred Writings: I try to inebriate others with the wine of the ancient classics. I begin to nourish some with the apples of Grammatical subtlety. I strive to illuminate many by the arrangement of the Stars, as from the painted roof of a lofty palace." "But," he adds, "I want those more exquisite books of scholastic erudition which I had in my own country.—May it then please your wisdom, that I send some of our youths to procure what we need; and to convey into France the flowers of Britain, that they may not be locked up in York only, but that 'their fragrance and fruit may adorn, at Tours, the gardens and streams of the Loire.'"[20]

Some of the Anglo-Saxons, if we may judge from Alcuin, had a high and just idea of the efficacy of literary education in meliorating the temper, and in forming a noble character; and it appears that the

[20] Alc. Ep. p. 1463.

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sentiments of Charlemagne were as enlightened as those of his preceptor. Alcuin says to him:—

"Yet as you wish that the *fierceness* of your youths should be mitigated by the sweetness of all kinds of poetry, you have provided for this with the wisest counsel. Sometimes the asperity of the mind does not feel the effects of sagacious advice, and sometimes the continued gentleness of the temper tends to enervate the spirit. But among these diseases the prudent temperament will arise from the middle path; now softening the swelling fury of the soul, and now rousing its slothfulness. This kind of virtue is peculiarly necessary to warriors. We read in ancient history, that a wise command of temper ought to guide and govern every thing that is done."[21]

In another place he expatiates ardently on the benefit of lettered education.

"Nothing tends to acquire more nobly a happy life; nothing is more pleasant for our recreation, nor more powerful against vice; nothing is more laudable in the highest ranks, nor more necessary for the due government of a state; nothing is more efficacious in forming life to the most becoming manners, than Wisdom, Study, and Knowledge!"—He adds, "Exhort, O King! all the noble youths in your palace to acquire and possess these advantages by their daily studies, that their blooming spring may so profit from them as to lead them to an honoured old age, and a blessed immortality."[22]

[21] Alc. Ep. p. 1473.

[22] Ibid. p. 1464.

## CHAP. III.

### *Their Food.*

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THEIR food was that mixture of animal and vegetable diet which always attends the progress of civilisation. They reared various sorts of corn in inclosed and cultivated lands, and they fed domesticated cattle for the uses of their table.

For their animal food they had oxen, sheep, and great abundance of swine; they used, likewise, fowls, deer, goats, and hares; but though the horned cattle are not unfrequently mentioned in their grants and wills, and were often the subjects of exchange, yet the animals most numerously stated are the swine. The country in all parts abounded with wood; and woods are not often particularized without some notice of the swine which they contained, or were capable of maintaining. They also frequently appear in wills. Thus Alfred, a nobleman, gives to his relations an hide of land with one hundred swine; and he directs one hundred swine to be given for his soul to one minister, and the same number to another; and to his two daughters he gives two thousand swine.[1] So Elfhelm gives land to St. Peter's at Westminster, on the express condition that they feed two hundred of these animals for his wife.[2]

They ate various kinds of fish; but, of this description of their animal food, the species which is most profusely noticed is the eel. They used eels as abundantly as swine. Two grants are mentioned, each

[1] 1 Will. in App. Sax. Dict.

[2] Ibid.

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yielding one thousand eels,[3] and by another two thousand were received as an annual rent. Four thousand eels were a yearly present from the monks of Ramsay to those of Peterborough.[4] We read of two places purchased for twenty-one pounds, wherein sixteen thousand of these fish were caught[5] every year; and, in one charta, twenty fishermen are stated, who furnished, during the same period, sixty thousand eels to the monastery.[6] Eel dikes are often mentioned in the boundaries of their lands.

In the dialogues composed by Elfric to instruct the Anglo-Saxon youths in the Latin language, which are yet preserved to us[7], we have some curious information concerning the manners and trades of our ancestors. In one colloquy the fisherman is asked, 'What gettest thou by thine art?' "Big loaves, clothing, and money."—'How do you take them?' "I, ascend my ship, and cast my net into the river; I also throw in a hook, a bait, and a rod."—'Suppose the fishes are unclean?' "I throw the unclean out, and take the clean for food."—'Where do you sell your fish?' "In the city."—'Who buys them?' "The citizens; I cannot take so many as I can sell."—'What fishes do you take?' "Eels, haddocks, minnows, and eel-pouts, skate, and lampreys,[8] and whatever swims in the river."—'Why do you not fish in the sea?' "Sometimes I do; but rarely, because a great ship is necessary there."—'What do you take in the sea?' "Herrings, and salmons, porpoises, sturgeons, oysters, and crabs, muscles, winkles, cockles, flounders, plaice, lobsters,[9] and such like."—'Can you take a whale?' "No, it is dangerous to take a whale; it is safer for me to go to the river with my ship than to go with

[3] 3 Gale, 477.
[4] Ibid. 456.
[5] Dugdale Mon. p. 244.
[6] Ibid. p. 235.
[7] In the Cotton Library, MS. Tib. A. 3.
[8] The Saxon names for these are, ælaf, hacoðaf, mynaf, ⁊ ælepuꝺan, ꝼceoꝺan, ⁊ lamppeðan. MS. Tib. A. 3.
[9] Ðeꝼincgaf ⁊ leaxaf, meneꝼꝼỳn ⁊ ꝼcimian, oꝼꝺean ⁊ cnabban, muꝼlan, ꝑine ꝑinclan, ꝼæ coccaf, ꝼaȝe, ꝼloc, lopỳꝼꝺan. MS. ib.

many ships to hunt whales."—'Why?' "Because it is more pleasant to me to take fish which I can kill with one blow; yet many take whales without danger, and then they get a great price, but I dare not, from the fearfulness of my mind."

This extract shows the uniformity of human taste on the main articles of food. Fish was such a favourite diet, that the supply never equalled the demand, and the same fishes were then in request which we select, though our taste has declined for the porpoises. The porpoise is mentioned in a convention between an archbishop and the clergy at Bath, which enumerates six of them under the name of mere-swine, or the sea-swine, and thirty thousand herrings.[10]

In the earlier periods of the Anglo-Saxon colonisation, their use of fish was more limited: for we read in Bede, that Wilfrid rescued the people of Sussex from famine in the eighth century by teaching them to catch fish: "For though the sea and their rivers abounded with fish, they had no more skill in the art than to take eels. The servants of Wilfrid threw into the sea nets made out of those by which they had obtained eels, and thus directed them to a new source of plenty.[11] It may account for Wilfrid's superior knowledge, to remark, that he had travelled over the continent to Rome.

It is an article in the Penitentiale of Egbert, that fish might be bought though dead.[12] The same treatise allows herrings to be eaten, and states, that when boiled they are salutary in fever and diarrhœa, and that their gall mixed with pepper is good for a sore mouth![13]

Horse-flesh, which our delicacy rejects with aversion, appears to have been used, though it became unfashionable as their civilisation advanced. The

[10] MS. CCC. apud Cantab. Miscell. G. p. 73.
[11] Bede lib. iv. c. 13.
[12] 1 Wilkins, Conc. p. 123.
[13] Ibid.

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Penitentiale says, "Horse-flesh is not prohibited, though many families will not buy it."[14] But in the council held in 785, in Northumbria, before Alfwold, and in Mercia, before Offa, it was discountenanced. "Many among you eat horses, which is not done by any Christians in the East. Avoid this."[15]

But though animal food was in much use among our ancestors, it was, as it is with us, and perhaps will be in every country in which agriculture has become habitual, and population much increased, rather the food of the wealthier part of the community than of the lower orders.

That it could not be afforded by all, is clear, from the incident of a king and queen visiting a monastey, and inquiring, when they saw the boys eating only bread, if they were allowed nothing else. The answer returned was, that the scanty means of the society could afford no better. The queen then petitioned the king to enable them to provide additional food.[16]

They had wheat and barley in general use, but their prices were different; wheat, like meat, was a dearer article, and therefore less universal. It is said of the abbey of St. Edmund, that the young monks eat barley-bread, because the income of the establishment would not admit of their feeding twice or thrice a-day on wheaten bread.[17] Their corn was thrashed with a flail like our own, and ground by the simple mechanism of mills, of which great numbers are particularised in the Doomsday Survey. In their most ancient law, we read of a king's grinding-servant[18]; but both water-mills and wind-mills occur very frequently in their conveyances after that time.

They used warm bread.[19] The life of St. Neot states, that the peasant's wife placed on her oven "the loaves

[14] 1 Wilkins Conc. p. 123.
[15] Ibid. p. 151.
[16] MS. Cotton Claud. C. 9. p. 128.
[17] Dugd. Mon. p. 296.
[18] Wilkins's Leg. Sax. p. 2.
[19] Bede, ed. Smith, p. 234.

which some call loudas."[20] In the agreement of one of their social gilds, a broad loaf well besewon and well gesyfled is noticed.[21] In one grant of land we find six hundred loaves reserved as a rent[22], and oftentimes cheeses. They were allowed to use milk, cheese, and eggs, on their fast-days.[23] Some individual devotees chose to be very rigorous. In 735, a lady is mentioned, in Oxford, of a noble family, who mortified herself by lying on the bare ground, and subsisting on broth made of the poorest herbs, aud on a small quantity of barley-bread.[24] In the same century, Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon missionary, complained of some priests, that they did not eat of the meats which God had given, and that others fed on milk and honey, rejecting animal food.[25]

Abstinence too rigorous was not, however, a general fault of the Anglo-Saxon monks. On the contrary, whenever the interior of a well-endowed monastery is opened to our view, we meet with an abundance which precluded mortification.[26]

Orchards were cultivated[27], and we find figs, grapes, nuts, almonds, pears, and apples, mentioned.[28] Lac acidum, perhaps butter-milk or whey, was used in a monastery in very handsome vessels, called creches, from Hokeday to Michaelmas, and lac dulce from Michaelmas to Martinmas. In the same place placentas were allowed in the Easter and Whitsun weeks, and on some other festivals, and broth or soups every day.[29] In another monastery, we find land given to provide beans, salt, and honey for the brothers.[30] From the panegyric of Aldhelm, we may

[20] MS. Cott. Claud. A. 5. p. 157.
[21] Dugd. Mon. p. 278.
[22] Sax. Chron. 75.
[23] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 194.
[24] Dugd. Mon. 173.
[25] Bon. Ep. Mag. Bib. Pal. xvi. p. 50.
[26] The allowances of the Abingdon monastery may be taken as a specimen. See them in Dugd. Mon. p. 104.
[27] 3 Gale Script. 490.
[28] Ingulf, p. 50.
[29] Dugd. Mon. p. 104. The creche contained septem pollices ad profunditatem a summitate unius usque ad profundum lateris ulterius. Ibid.
[30] 3 Gale Script. 445.

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infer that honey was a favourite diet; for he says, that it excels all the dishes of delicacies and peppered broths.[31]

In the MS. before mentioned, a colloquy occurs with the baker (bæcere). 'Of what use is your art? we can live long without you.' "You may live through some space without my art, but not long, nor so well; for without my craft every table would seem empty, and without bread (hlafe) all meat would become nauseous. I strengthen the heart of man, and little ones could not do without me."[32]

In the same MS. the food of children is thus mentioned: 'What do you eat to-day?' "As yet I feed on flesh-meat, because I am a child living under the rod"—'What more do you eat?' "Herbs, eggs, fish, cheese, butter and beans, and all clean things I eat with many thanks."[33]

They appear to have used great quantities of salt, from the numerous grants of land which specify salt-pans as important articles. In the end of autumn they killed and salted much meat for their winter consumption. It is probable that their provision of winter fodder for their cattle was very imperfect, and that salted meat was in a great measure their food till the spring reclothed the fields with verdure. One part of the dialogue above alluded to is on the salter.

'Salter! what does your craft profit us?' "Much: none of you can enjoy pleasure in your dinner or supper, unless my art be propitious to him."—'How?' "Which of you can enjoy savoury meats without the smack of salt? Who could sell the contents of his cellar or his storehouses without my craft? Lo! all butter (buter gethweor) and cheese (cys gerun) would perish, unless you used me."[34]

[31] Ald. de Laud. Virg. p. 296.
[32] MS. Cott. Tib. A. 3.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.

The Anglo-Saxon ladies were not excluded from the society of the male sex at their meals. It was at dinner that the king's mother urged Dunstan to accept the vacant bishoprick[35], and it appears from many passages in Saxon writings, and from the drawings in the MSS., that both sexes were together at their seasons of refreshment.

We have an account of Ethelstan's dining with his relation Ethelfleda. The royal providers, it says, knowing that the king had promised her the visit, came the day before to see if every preparation was ready and suitable. Having inspected all, they told her, "You have plenty of every thing, provided your mead holds out." The king came with a great number of attendants at the appointed time, and, after hearing mass, entered joyfully in the dinner apartment; but unfortunately in the first salutation, their copious draughts exhausted the mead vessel. Dunstan's sagacity had foreseen the event, and provided against it; and though "the cup-bearers, as is the custom at royal feasts, were *all the day* serving it up in cut horns, and other vessels of various sizes," the liquor was not found to be deficient. This, of course, very much delighted his majesty and his companions; and, as Dunstan chose to give it a miraculous appearance, it procured him infinite credit.[36]

An historian of the twelfth century contrasts, with much regret, the fashion, introduced by the Normans at court, of only one entertainment a day, with the custom of one of our preceding kings, who feasted his courtiers daily with four ample banquets. He contends that the parsimony produced the direful change, though it was ascribed to dignity.[37] Many

[35] MS. Cott. Cleop. B. 13. and Nero. C. 7.

[36] Cleop. B. 13. p. 67., and Acta Sanct. 29th May, p. 349, 350.

[37] Hen. Hunt. lib. vi p. 365. Malmsbury remarks, that the profusion of the English feasts was increased after the Danish visits, p. 248.

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good customs have originated from selfish causes; but no one will now dispute, that both mental and moral refinement must have been much advanced by this diminution of the incitements and the opportunities of gluttony and inebriety. We may remember of the king Hardicanute, so celebrated for his conviviality, that he died at a feast.

A few circumstances may be added of their fasting. It is mentioned in Edgar's regulations, as a part of the penance of a rich man, that he should fast on bread, green herbs, and water.[38] It is expressed in another part, that a layman during his penitence should eat no flesh, nor drink any thing that might inebriate.[39] The law of Wihtræd severely punished the non-observance of fast-days. If any man gave meat to his servants on these days, he was declared liable to the pillory, or literally the neck-catch, healsfang. If the servant ate it of his own accord, he was fined six shillings, or was to suffer in his hide.[40]

[38] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 97. [39] Ibid. 94. [40] Ibid. 11.

## CHAP. IV.

### *Their Drinks and Cookery.*

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Ale and mead were their favourite drinks, and wine was an occasional luxury. Of the ale, three sorts were noticed. In a charter, two tons of clear ale, and ten mittan or measures of Welsh ale are reserved.[1] In another, a cumb full of lithes, or mild ale.[2] Warm wine is also mentioned.[3]

The answer of the lad, in the Saxon colloquy, to the question, what he drank, was, "Ale if I have it, or water if I have not." On being asked why he does not drink wine, he says, "I am not so rich that I can buy me wine, and wine is not the drink of children or the weak-minded, but of the elders and the wise."[4]

In the ancient calendar of the eleventh century, there are various figures pictured, to accompany the different months. In April, three persons appear sitting and drinking: one person is pouring out liquor into a horn; another is holding a horn to his mouth.[5]

We have the list of the liquors used at a great Anglo-Saxon feast, in a passage of Henry of Huntingdon, which describes an atrocious catastrophe:—

At a feast in the king's hall at Windsor, Harold, the son of Godwin, was serving the Confessor with wine, when Tosti, his brother, stimulated by envy at his

[1] Sax. Chron. 75.

[2] Two tuns full of hlutres aloth, a cumb full of lithes aloth, and a cumb full of welisces aloth, are the gafol reserved in a grant of Offa. Dugd. Mon. p. 126.

[3] Bede, 257. [4] MS. Tib. A. 3. [5] MS. Tib. B. 5.

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possessing a larger portion of the royal favour than himself, seized Harold by the hair in the king's presence. In a rage, Tosti left the company, and went to Hereford, where his brother had ordered a great royal banquet to be prepared. There he seized his brother's attendants, and cutting off their heads and limbs, he placed them in the vessels of wine, mead, ale, pigment, morat, and cider. He then sent to the king a message, that he was going to his farm, where he should find plenty of salt meat, but had taken care to carry some with him.[6] The pigment was a sweet and odoriferous liquor made of honey, wine, and spiceries of various kinds. The morat was made of honey, diluted with the juice of mulberries.[7]

As the canons were severe on drunkenness, though the manners of society made all their regulations ineffectual, it was thought necessary to define what was considered to be improper and penal intoxication. "This is drunkenness, when the state of the mind is changed, the tongue stammers, the eyes are disturbed, the head is giddy, the belly is swelled, and pain follows." To atone for this, fasts, proportioned in duration to the quality of the offender, were enjoined.[8]

It will not be uninteresting to add the description of a feast, as given in Judith by an Anglo-Saxon poet:

> Then was Holofernes
> Enchanted with the wine of men:
> In the hall of the guests
> He laughed and shouted,
> He roared and dinned,
> That the children of men might hear afar,
> How the sturdy one
> Stormed and clamoured,

[6] Hen. Hunt. lib. vi. p. 367.
[7] Du Cange, in voc. and Henry's History of England, iv. p. 396.
[8] Spelm. Concilia, 286.

Animated and elated with wine.
He admonished amply
Those sitting on the bench
That they should bear it well.
So was the wicked one all day,
The lord and his men,
Drunk with wine;
The stern dispenser of wealth;
Till that they swimming lay
Over drunk,
All his nobility
As they were death slain,
Their property poured about.
So commanded the lord of men
To fill to those sitting at the feast,
Till the dark night
Approached the children of men.[9]

We have a glance of their customs, as to drinking, in this short passage: "When all were satisfied with their dinner, and the tables were removed, they continued drinking till the evening."[10]

They seem to have had places like taverns or alehouses, where liquors were sold; for a priest was forbidden by a law to eat or drink at ceapealethelum, literally, places where ale was sold.[11]

Ethelwold allowed his monastery a great bowl, from which the obbæ of the monks were filled twice a day for their dinner and supper. On their festivals he allowed them at dinner a sextarium of mead between six, and the same quantity at supper between twelve of the brothers. On certain of the great high feasts of the year, he gave them a measure of wine.[12]

They boiled, baked, and broiled their victuals. We read of their meat dressed in a boiling vessel[13], of their fish having been broiled[14], and of an oven heated for baking loaves.[15] The term abacan is also applied to meat. In the rule of St. Benedict, two

[9] Frag. Judith.
[10] Gale Script. iii. p. 441.
[11] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 180. So Egbert exhorts. Spel. Conc. 260.
[12] Dugd. Mon. 104.
[13] Bede, p. 255.
[14] Ibid. 238.
[15] MS. Vesp. D. 14. p. 146.

sanda, or dishes of sodden syflian, or soup bouilli, are mentioned.[16] Bede mentions a goose that hung on the wall taken down to be boiled.[17] The word seathan, to boil, deserves notice, because the noun, seath, from which it is derivable, implies a pit. As we read in the South Sea islands of the natives dressing their victuals in little pits lined with stones, the expression may have been originally derived from a similar practice. A cook appears as an appendix to every monastery, and it was a character important enough to be inserted in the laws. In the cloisters it was a male office; elsewhere it was chiefly assumed by the female sex. In the dialogue already cited, the cook says, "If you expel me from your society, you would eat your herbs green, and your flesh raw." He is answered, "We can ourselves seethe what is to be seethed, and broil what things are to be broiled."[18]

They seem to have attended to cookery, not merely as a matter of taste, but of indispensable decorum. It was one of their regulations, that if a person ate any thing half dressed, ignorantly, he should fast three days; if knowingly, four days. Perhaps, as the uncivilized Northmen were, in their pagan state, addicted to eat raw flesh, the clergy of the Anglo-Saxons were anxious to keep their improved countrymen from relapsing into such barbarous customs.[19]

In the drawings which accompany some Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, we have soms delineation of their customs at table.[20] In one drawing, a party is at

[16] MS. Tib. A. 3. [17] Bede, 255. [18] MS. Tib.

[19] Spelm. Concil. 287. The same principle perhaps led them to add these regulations: "For eating or drinking what a cat or dog has spoiled, he shall sing an hundred psalms, or fast a day. For giving another any liquor in which a mouse or a weasel shall be found dead, a layman shall do penance for four days; a monk shall sing three hundred psalms." Spelm. Concil. p. 287.

[20] The industrious and useful Strutt has copied these drawings in the first volume of his Horda Angelcynnan. Nothing can more satisfactorily illustrate the manners of our ancestors, than such publications of their ornamental drawings; for, as Strutt truly observes in his preface, "though these pictures do not bear the

table, seated, with the females by the side of the men, in this order: a man, a lady; a man, a lady; two men, and another lady. The two first are looking towards each other, as if talking together; the three in the middle are engaged with each other, and so are the two last; each have a cup or horn in their hand. The table is oblong, and covered with a table-cloth that hangs low down from the table; a knife, a horn, a bowl, a dish, and some loaves appear. The men are uncovered; the women have their usual head-dress.[21]

In another drawing, the table is a sharp oval, also covered with an ample cloth; upon it, besides a knife and a spoon, there are a bowl, with a fish, some loaves of bread, and two other dishes. Some part of the costume is more like the manners of Homer's heroes than of modern times. At the angles of the tables two attendants are upon their knees, with a dish in one hand, and each holding up a spit with the other, from which the persons feasting are about to cut something. One of these persons, to whom the servants minister with so much respect, is holding a whole fish with one hand, and a knife in the other.[22]

In the drawing which accompanies Lot feasting the angels, the table is oblong, rounded at the ends, and covered with a cloth. Upon it is a bowl, with an animal's head like a pig's; another bowl is full of some round things like apples. These, with loaves or cakes of bread, seem to constitute the repast. There are two horns upon the table, and one of the

least resemblance of the things they were originally intended to represent, yet they nevertheless are the undoubted characteristics of the customs of that period in which each illuminator or designer lived."

[21] This is in Strutt's work, plate xvi. fig. 2., and is taken from the Cotton MS. Claud. B. 4. The MS. consists of excerpta from the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua, which are adorned with historical figures, some of which are those above alluded to.

[22] See Strutt, plate xvi. fig. 1.

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angels has a knife.[23] As no forks appear in any of the plates, and are not mentioned elsewhere, we may presume that our ancestors used their hands instead.

There is one drawing of men killing and dressing meat. One man is holding a sheep by his horns, while a lad strikes at its neck with an axe; behind him is a young man severing an animal's head from his body with an axe. Another has put a long stick, with a hook attached to it, into a cauldron, as if to pull up meat. The cauldron is upon a trivet of four legs, as high as the servant's knee, within which the fire is made, and blazing up to the cauldron.[24]

[23] Strutt, plate xvi. fig. 3., and Claud. B. 4. Forks are supposed to have been introduced into England, from Italy, by Tom Coriate, in James the First's time; yet, I think, I have seen them mentioned as in use before his time.

[24] Strutt, plate xvii. fig. 2., and from Claud. B. 4. The tapestry of Bayeux is as useful in showing the cookery and feasting of the Normans.

## CHAP. V.

### *Their Dress.*



THE Anglo-Saxons had become so much acquainted with the conveniences of civilised life, as to have both variety and vanity of dress. Some change took place in their apparel after their conversion to Christianity, which rendered their former customs disreputable; for, at a council held in 785, it is said, "You put on your garments in the manner of the Pagans, whom your fathers expelled from the world; an astonishing thing, that you imitate those whose life you always hated!"[1]

It is difficult, at this distance of time, to apprehend with precision the meaning of the terms of their dress which time has permitted to reach us, and to state them with that order and illustration which will enable the reader to conceive justly of their costume. The imperfections of our attempt must be excused by its difficulty. We will begin with what we have been able to collect of an Anglo-Saxon lady's dress.

The wife, described by Aldhelm, has necklaces and bracelets, and also rings with gems on her fingers. Her hair was dressed artificially; he mentions the twisted hairs delicately curled with the iron of those adorning her.

In this part of her dress she was a contrast to the religious virgin, whose hair was entirely neglected.[2] Their hair was highly valuable and reputable among

[1] Concil. Calchut. Spelm. Conc. p. 300.
[2] Aldhelm de Laud. Virg. p. 307.

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the Saxon ladies. Judith is perpetually mentioned with epithets allusive to her hair. Her twisted locks are more than once noticed:

> The maid of the Creator,
> With twisted locks,
> Took then a sharp sword.
>
> ---
>
> She with the twisted locks
> Then struck her hateful enemy,
> Meditating ill,
> With the ruddy sword.
>
> ---
>
> The most illustrious virgin
> Conducted and led them,
> Resplendent with her twisted locks,
> To the bright city of Bethulia.[3]

The laws mention a free woman, loc bore, wearing her locks as a distinguishing circumstance.[4] Judith is also described with her ornaments:

> The prudent one, adorned with gold,
> Ordered her maidens ——
> Then commanded he
> The blessed virgin
> With speed to fetch
> To his bed rest,
> With bracelets laden,
> With rings adorned.[5]

Aldhelm also describes the wife as loving to paint her cheeks with the red colour of stibium.[6] The art of painting the face is not the creature of refinement; the most barbarous nations seem to be the most liberal in their use of this fancied ornament.

The will of Wynflæd makes us acquainted with several articles of the dress and ornaments of an Anglo-Saxon lady. She gives to Ethelflœda, one of her daughters, her engraved beah, or bracelet, and her covering mantle (mentel). To Eadgyfa, another

[3] Frag. Judith, ed. Thwaite.
[4] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 6.
[5] Frag. Jud.
[6] Aldhelm, p. 307.

of her daughters, she leaves her best dun tunic, and her better mantle, and her covering garment. She also mentions her pale tunics, her torn cyrtel, and other linen, web, or garment. She likewise notices her white cyrtel, and the cuffs and riband (cuffian and bindan).[7]

Among the ornaments mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon documents, we read of a golden fly, beautifully adorned with gems[8]; of golden vermiculated necklaces[9]; of a bulla that had belonged to the grandmother of the lady spoken of[10]; of golden head-bands[11], and of a neck-cross.[12]

The ladies had also gowns; for a bishop of Winchester sends, as a present, "a short gown (gunna) sewed in our manner."[13] Thus we find the mantle, the kirtle, and the gown, mentioned by these names among the Saxons, and even the ornament of cuffs.

In the drawings on the manuscripts of these times, the women appear with a long loose robe, reaching down to the ground, and large loose sleeves. Upon their head is a hood or veil, which, falling down before, was wrapped round the neck and breast.[14] All the ladies in the drawing have their necks, from the chin, closely wrapped in this manner; and in none of them is a fine waist attempted to be displayed, nor have their heads any other covering than their hood.

In the dress of the men, the province of female taste was intruded upon by the ornaments they used. They had sometimes gold and precious stones round

[7] Our Saxon scholar, Hickes, has given a transcript of this will, in his preface to his Gram. Anglo-Sax. p. 22.

[8] Dugd. Mon. 240. [9] Ibid. 263. [10] Ibid. 268.

[11] Thorp. Reg. Roffen. 26., and Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 7.

[12] In the Archbishop's Will. Cott. Lib. MS. Tib. A. 3.

[13] 16 Mag. Bib. 82. A gown made of an otter's skin is mentioned, p. 88.

[14] Strutt's Horda Angelcynn. i. p. 47.

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their necks[15], and the men of consequence or wealth usually had expensive bracelets on their arms, and rings on their fingers. It is singular, that the bracelets of the male sex were more costly than those allotted to the fair. In an Anglo-Saxon will, the testator bequeaths to his lord a beah, or bracelet, of eighty gold mancusa, and to his lady one of thirty. He had two neck bracelets, one of forty, and another of eighty gold mancusa, and two golden bands.[16] We read of two golden bracelets, and five gold ornaments, called sylas, sent by an Anglo-Saxon to her friend.[17] Their rings are frequently mentioned: an archbishop bequeaths one in his will[18]; and a king sent a gold ring, with twelve sagi, as a present to a bishop.[19] The ring appears to have been worn on the finger next to the little finger, and on the right hand, for a Saxon law calls that the gold finger; and we find a right hand was once cut off on account of this ornament.

In some of the stately apparel of the male sex we see that fondness for gorgeous finery which their sturdier character might have been expected to have disdained. We read of silk garments woven with golden eagles[20]: so a king's coronation garment was of silk, woven with gold flowers[21]; and his cloak is mentioned, distinguished by its costly workmanship, and its gold and gems.[22] Such was the avidity for these distinctions, that Elfric, in his canons, found it necessary to exhort the clergy not to be ranc, that is,

[15] Bede, p. 332. Malmsbury mentions the Angles as having heavy gold bracelets on their arms, and with pictured impressions, "picturatis stigmatibus," a kind of tattooing, on their skin, p. 102.

[16] See the will of Byrhtric in Thorpe's Reg. Roffen. p. 25.; also in Hickes's Thes.

[17] Mag. Bib. Pat. xvi. p. 92. Wynfleda, in her will, leaves a man a wooden cup adorned with gold, that he might augment his beah with the gold. Hickes's Pref.

[18] Cott. MS. Claud. C. 125. [19] Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 89.

[20] Ingulf, p. 61. [21] Ibid. p. 61. [22] 3 Gale Script. 494.

proud, with their rings, and not to have their garments made too ranclike.[23]

They had silk, linen, and woollen garments. A bishop gave, in the eighth century, as a present to one abroad, a woollen tunic, and another of linen, adding, "as it was the custom of the Anglo-Saxons to wear it."[24] The use of linen was not uncommon; for it is remarked, as a peculiarity of a nun, that she rarely wore linen, but chiefly woollen garments.[25]

Silk, from its cost, cannot have been common; but it was often used by the great and wealthy. Ethelbert, king of Kent, gave a silken part of dress, called an armilcasia.[26] Bede mentions two silken pallia of incomparable workmanship.[27] His own remains were inclosed in silk.[28] It often adorned the altars of the church; and we read of a present to a West-Saxon bishop, of a casula, expressed to be not entirely of silk, but mixed with goats' wool.[29]

The delineations of the Saxon manuscripts almost universally represent the hair of the men as divided from the crown to the forehead, and combed down the sides of the head in waving ringlets. Their beards were continuations of their whiskers on each side, meeting the hair from the chin, but there dividing, and ending in two forked points. Young men usually, and sometimes servants, are represented without beards. The heads of the soldiers are covered; but workmen, and even nobles, are frequently represented, as in the open air, without any hats or caps.[30]

[23] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 158. Ranc and ranclike originally meant proud and gorgeous. The words have now become appropriated to express dignity of situation.

[24] 16 Mag. Bib. p. 82.

[25] Bede, lib. iv. c. 19. The interior tunic of St. Neot is described to have been ex panno villoso, in the Irish manner. Dugd. Mon. 368.

[26] Dugd. Mon. 24.

[27] Bede, p. 297. A pallia holoserica is mentioned as a present, in Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 97.

[28] Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 88.

[29] Ibid. p. 50.

[30] See the plates in Strutt's Hord. Angel.

To have a beard was forbidden to the clergy.[31] But the historian of Malmsbury informs us, that in the time of Harold the Second, the English laity shaved their beards, but allowed the hair of their upper lip a full growth.[32] The tapestry of Bayeux displays this costume: Harold, and most of the figures, have their mustachios, but no beards; King Edward, however, has his full beard. In the drawings of the Evangelists, in the fine Cotton MS.[33], Mark and John have neither beards nor moustachios, but Matthew and Luke have both.

They had shoes, or scoh, with thongs. Bede's account of Cuthbert is curious: he says, when the saint had washed the feet of those who came to him, they compelled him to take off his own shoes, that his feet might also be made clean; for so little did he attend to his bodily appearance, that he often kept his shoes, which were of leather, on his feet for several months together, frequently from Easter to Easter, without taking them off.[34] From this anecdote we may infer, that they had not stockings. Sometimes, however, the legs of the men appear in the drawings as covered half way up with a kind of bandage wound round, or else with a tight stocking reaching above the knee.[35]

The Anglo-Saxons, represented in the Bayeux tapestry, are dressed in this manner; both the great and their inferiors have caps or bonnets on their heads, which are kept on even in the presence of the king, sitting with his sceptre on the throne.

[31] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 85.

[32] Malmsb. lib. iii.

[33] Nero, D. 4.

[34] Bede, Vit. Cuthb. p. 243. In the life of St. Neot, he is said to have lost his scoh: he saw a fox having the thwanges of his shoe in his mouth. Vesp. D. xiv. p. 144.

[35] Strutt, Hord. Ang. p. 47. In St. Benedict's rule, MS. Tib. A. 3. socks (soccas) and stockings (hosan) are mentioned; also two other coverings for the legs and feet, called meon and fiand reaf fota, and the earm slife for the upper part of the body.

The steersman of one of the ships has a hat on, with a projecting flap turning upwards. Most of the figures have close coats, with sleeves to the wrists.[36] They are girded round them with a belt, and have loose skirts like kelts, but not reaching quite to the knee. Harold on horseback, with his falcon, has breeches which do not cover his knee, and a cloak flowing behind him. His knights have breeches covering the knees; and cloaks, which, like Harold's, are buttoned on the right shoulder.[37] One of those standing before the king has a cloak, or sagum, which falls down to its full length, and reaches just below the bend of the knee.[38] Harold, when he is about to go into the ship, wears a sort of jacket with small flaps. In the ship he appears with his cloak and the surrounding skirts, which are exhibited with a border; but when he takes the oath to William, he has a cloak or robe reaching nearly to his heels, and buttoned on the breast. They have always belts on. Most of them have shoes, which seem close round the ancle; others, even the great men, sometimes have none.[39]

In the history of the Lombards, the Anglo-Saxon garments are stated to have been loose and flowing, and chiefly made of linen, adorned with broad borders,

[36] Strutt has given a complete drawing of a Saxon close coat, in Tab. 15. It appears to have been put over the head like a shirt.

[37] For a description of this clasp or button, see Strutt, p. 46.

[38] It was probably of cloaks like these, that Charlemagne exclaimed, "Of what use are these little cloaks? We cannot be covered by them in bed. When I am on horseback, they cannot defend me from the wind and rain; and when we retire for other occasions, I am starved with cold in my legs." St. Gall. ap. Bouquet Recueil, tom. vii.

[39] Strutt remarks, from the drawings, that the kings and nobles, when in their state dress, were habited in a loose coat, which reached down to the ancles, and had over that a long robe, fastened, over both shoulders, on the middle of the breast, with a clasp or buckle. He adds, that the edges and bottoms of their coats, as well as of their robes, were often trimmed with a broad gold edging, or else flowered with different colours. The soldiers and common people wore close coats, reaching only to the knee, and a short cloak over their left shoulder, which buckled on the right. The kings and nobles were habited in common in a dress similar to this, but richer and more elegant. Strutt, Hord. Ang. i. p. 46.

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woven or embroidered with various colours.[40] In the MSS. of the Saxon Gospels, Nero, D. 4., the four Evangelists are drawn in colours, and the garments in which they are represented may be considered as specimens of the Anglo-Saxon dress.

Matthew has a purple under-gown, or vest, rather close, coming down to the wrists, with a yellow border at the neck, wrists, and the bottom. His upper robe is green, with red stripes, much looser than the other. His feet have no shoes, but a lacing, as for sandals. There is a brown curtain, with rings, and a yellow bottom. His stool has a brown cushion, but no back. He writes on his knee.

Mark wears a purple robe, striped with blue, buttoned at the neck, where it opens, and shows an under garment of light blue, striped with red. His cushion is blue: he has a footstool and a small round table.

Luke's under-dress is a sort of lilac, with light green stripes; over this is a purple robe with red stripes. The arm is of the colour of the vest, and comes through the robe. His wrist and neck have a border.

John's under-garment is a pea-green with red stripes; his upper robe is purple with blue stripes; this is very loose, and, opening at the breast, shows the dress beneath. These pictures show, what many passages also imply, that our ancestors were fond of many colours.[41] The council in 785 ordered the clergy not to wear the tinctured colours of India, nor precious garments.[42] The clergy, whose garments were thus compulsorily simplified, endeavoured to ex-

[40] See before.

[41] Bede mentions, that in Saint Cuthbert's monastery they used clothing of the natural wool, and not of varied or precious colours, p. 242. Two cloaks are mentioned among the letters of Boniface, one of which is said to be of very artful workmanship, the other of a tinctured colour.

[42] Spel. Concil. p. 294.

tend their fashion to those of the laity. Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon missionary, in his letter to the archbishop of Canterbury, inveighs against luxuries of dress, and declares, that those garments which are adorned with very broad studs, and images of worms, announce the coming of Anti-Christ.[43] In the same spirit, at the council of Cloveshoe, the nuns were exhorted to pass their time rather in reading books and singing hymns, than in weaving and working garments of empty pride in diversified colours.[44] That they lined their garments with furs made from sables, beavers, and foxes, or, when they wished to be least expensive, with the skins of lambs or cats, we learn from the life of Wulstan.[45]

[43] Spel. Concil. p. 241.

[44] Ibid. 256.

[45] Anglia Sacra, vol. ii. p. 259. Our Henry, whose remarks on the dress of our ancestors are well worth reading, has given a translation of the passage in his History, vol. iv. p. 289.

## CHAP. VI.

*Their Houses, Furniture, and Luxuries.*

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In their ecclesiastical buildings the Anglo-Saxons were expensive and magnificent; their dwelling-houses seem to have been small and inconvenient.[1] Domestic architecture is one of the things that most conspicuously displays and attends the progress of national wealth and taste. The more we recede into the antiquities of every state, we invariably find the habitations of the people ruder and less commodious.

Their furniture we can only know as it happens to be mentioned, and sometimes imperfectly described in some of their writings. They may have had many things which we have, but we must conceive of all we find enumerated, that it was heavy, rude, and unworkmanlike. It is in a polished age, and among industrious and wealthy nations, that the mechanical arts attain excellence; and that every convenience of domestic life combines always finished neatness, and frequently elegance and taste, with economy of materials, and utility.

The Anglo-Saxons had many conveniences and luxuries, which men so recently emerging from the barbarian state could not have derived from their own invention. They were indebted for these to their conversion to Christianity. When the Gothic nations exchanged their idolatry for the Christian faith, hierarchies arose in every converted state, which

[1] Strutt has copied a Saxon house from the MS. Cleop. C. 8. in his fig. 3. of Plate I. The building of the tower of Babel, in his sixth plate, from MS. Claud. B. 4., may be considered as another specimen of their domestic architecture.

maintained a close and perpetual intercourse with Rome and with each other. From the letters of Pope Gregory, of our Boniface, and many others, we perceive that an intercourse of personal civilities, visits, messages, and presents, was perpetually taking place. Whatever was rare, curious, or valuable, which one person possessed, he communicated, and not unfrequently gave to his acquaintance. This is very remarkable in the letters of Boniface and his friends[2], of whom some were in England, some in France, some in Germany, and elsewhere. The most cordial phrases of urbanity and affection are usually followed by a present of apparel, the aromatic productions of the East, little articles of furniture and domestic comfort, books, and whatever else promised to be acceptable to the person addressed. This reciprocity of liberality, and the perpetual visits which all ranks of the state were in the habit of making to Rome, the seat and centre of all the arts, science, wealth, and industry of the day, occasioned a general diffusion and use of the known conveniences and approved inventions which had then appeared.

Among the furniture of their rooms, we find hangings, to be suspended on the walls, most of them silken, some with the figures of golden birds in needlework, some woven, and some plain.[3] At another time, a veil or piece of hanging is mentioned, on which was sewed the destruction of Troy.[4] These were royal presents. We also read of the curtain of a lady, on which was woven the actions of her husband, in memory of his probity.[5] These articles of manufacture for domestic use are obviously alluded to by Aldhelm in his simile, in which he mentions the texture of hangings or curtains, their being stained with purple and different varieties of colours, and

[2] These are in the sixteenth volume of the Magna Bibliotheca Patrum.
[3] Ingulf, p. 53. [4] Ibid. 9. [5] 3 Gale Script. 495.

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their images, embroidery, and weaving. Their love of gaudy colouring was as apparent in these as in their dress; for he says, "If finished of one colour, uniform, they would not seem beautiful to the eye."[6] Curtains and hangings are very often mentioned; sometimes in Latin phrases, pallia or cortinas[7]; sometimes in the Saxon term wahrift. Thus Wynfleda bequeaths a long heall wahrift and a short one, and Wulfur bequeaths an heall wahrifta; the same testator also leaves a heall reafes.[8] Whether this is another expression for a hanging to the hall, or whether it alludes to any thing like a carpet, the expression itself will not decide. The probability is, that it expresses a part of the hangings. We can perceive the reasons why hangings were used in such early times: their carpenters were not exact and perfect joiners; their buildings were full of crevices, and hangings were therefore rather a necessity than a luxury, as they kept out the wind from the inhabitants. Nothing can more strongly prove their necessity, than that Alfred, to preserve his lights from the wind, even in the royal palaces, was obliged to have recourse to lanterns.[9] Their hangings, we find, were not cheap enough to be used perpetually; and therefore when the king gave them to the monastery, he adds the injunction to the one gift, that it should be suspended on his anniversary, and to another, that it should be used on festivals.[10]

Benches[11] and seats, and their coverings, are also mentioned. In one gift, seven setl hrægel, or seat coverings[12], occur. Wynfleda bequeaths three setl hrægel.[13] Their footstools appear to have been much

[6] Aldhelm de Laud. Virg. 283.
[7] Dugd. 130. 3 Gale, 418. and 495. Ingulf, 53.
[8] Hickes, Præf. and Diss. Ep. 54.
[9] See vol. ii. of this work.
[10] Ingulf, 53.
[11] Dugd. Mon. 130.
[12] Dugd. 216.
[13] Hickes, ubi sup.

ornamented. Ingulf mentions two great pedalia with lions interwoven, and two smaller ones sprinkled with flowers.[14] Some of their seats or benches represented in the drawings have animals' heads and legs at their extremities.[15] Their seats seem to have been benches and stools.

Their tables are sometimes very costly; we read of two tables made of silver and gold.[16] Æthelwold, in Edgar's reign, is said to have made a silver table worth three hundred pounds.[17] We also read of a wooden table for an altar, which was adorned with ample and solid plates of silver, and with gems various in colour and species.[18]

Candlesticks of various sorts are mentioned; two large candlesticks of bone (gebonede candelsticcan), and six smaller of the same kind, are enumerated[19], as are also two silver candelabra, gilt[20], and two candelabra well and honourably made.[21] Bede once mentions that two candles were lighted.[22]

Hand-bells also appear. At one time twelve are stated to have been used in a monastery.[23] A disciple of Bede sends to Lullus, in France, "the bell which I have at my hand."[24] A silver mirror is also once mentioned.[25]

Of bed-furniture, we find in an Anglo-Saxon's will bed-clothes (beddreafes), with a curtain (hryfte), and sheet (hoppscytan), and all that thereto belongs; to his son he gives the bedreafe and all the clothes that appertain to it.[26] An Anglo-Saxon lady gives to one of her children two chests and their contents, her best bed-curtain, linen, and all the clothes belonging to

[14] Ingulf, 53.
[15] See Strutt, tab. 10.
[16] Dugd. Mon. 40.
[17] Dugd. Mon. 104.
[18] 3 Gale Script. 420.
[19] Dugd. Mon. 221.
[20] Ibid. 40.
[21] Dugd. 130 Candelabris ex argento ductilibus. Ib. 104.
[22] Bede, 259.
[23] Dugd. Mon, 221.
[24] 16 Mag. Bib. 88.
[25] Dugd. 24.
[26] Hickes, Diss. Ep. 54.

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it. To another child she leaves two chests, and "all the bed-clothes that to one bed belong." She also mentions her red tent[27] (giteld). On another occasion we read of a pillow of straw.[28] A goat-skin bed-covering was sent to an Anglo-Saxon abbot.[29] In Judith we read of the gilded fly-net hung about the leader's bed.[30] Bear-skins are sometimes noticed as if a part of bed-furniture. There is a drawing of a Saxon bed and curtain in Claud. B. 4., which may be seen in Strutt, Horda Angelcynn, pl. xiii. fig. 2. The head and the bottom of the bed seem to be both boarded, and the pillows look as if made of platted straw. Not to go into a bed, but to lie on the floor, was occasionally enjoined as a penance.[31]

For their food and conviviality they used many expensive articles. It was indeed in these that their abundant use of the precious metals principally appeared. We perpetually read of silver cups, and sometimes of silver gilt. Byrhtric, in his will, bequeaths three silver cups.[32] Wulfur bequeaths four cups, two of which he describes as of four pounds' value.[33] Wynfleda gives, besides four silver cups, a cup with a fringed edge, a wooden cup variegated with gold, a wooden knobbed cup, and two smicere scencing cuppan, or very handsome drinking cups.[34] In other places we read of a golden cup, with a golden dish[35]; a gold cup of immense weight[36]; a dish adorned with gold, and another with Grecian workmanship.[37] A lady gave a golden cup, weighing four marks and a half.[38] The king of Kent sent to Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon missionary in Germany, a silver bason, gilt within, weighing three pounds and

[27] Hickes, Præf.
[28] 3 Gale Script. 418.
[29] 16 Mag. Bib. 52.
[30] Frag. Jud.
[31] Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. p. 97.
[32] Thorp. Reg. Roff. 30.
[33] Hickes, Diss. Ep. 54.
[34] Hickes, Præf. p. 22.
[35] Dugd. Mon. 21.
[36] Ibid. 104.
[37] Ibid. 40.
[38] Ibid. 240.

a half.[39] On another occasion, a great silver dish of excellent workmanship, and of great value, is noticed.[40] Two silver cups, weighing twelve marks, were used by the monks in a refectory, to serve their drink.[41] Two silver basons were given by a lady to a monastery.[42] A king, in 833, gave his gilt cup, engraved without with vine-dressers, fighting dragons, which he called his cross-bowl, because it had a cross marked within, and it had four angels projecting like a similar figure[43]; two silver cups, with covers, in one place[44]; five silver cups in another[45]; and such like notices, sufficiently prove to us that the rich and great among the Anglo-Saxons had no want of plate. At other times we meet with cups of bone[46], brazen dishes[47], and a coffer made of bones.[48] We may infer that the less affluent used vessels of wood and horn. A council ordered that no cup or dish made of horn should be used in the sacred offices.[49]

Horns were much used at table. Two buffalo horns are in Wynfleda's will.[50] Four horns are noticed in the list of a monastery's effects.[51] Three horns worked with gold and silver occur[52]; and the Mercian king gave to Croyland monastery the horn of his table, "that the elder monks may drink thereout on festivals, and in their benedictions remember sometimes the soul of the donor, Witlaf."[53] The curiously carved horn which is still preserved in York cathedral was made in the Anglo-Saxon times, and deserves the notice of the inquisitive, for its magnitude and workmanship.

Glass vessels, which are among the most valuable

[39] 16 Mag. Bib. p. 64.
[40] Dugd. 123.
[41] 3 Gale Script. 406.
[42] 3 Gale Script. 418.
[43] Ingulf, p. 9.
[44] Dugd. 40.
[45] Ibid. 221.
[46] Ibid. 221.
[47] Bede, lib. ii. c. 16.
[48] 16 Mag. Bib. 93.
[49] Spelm. Conc. 295.
[50] Hickes, Præf.
[51] Dugd. 221.
[52] Ibid. 40.
[53] Ingulf, 9.

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of our present comforts, were little used in the time of Bede and Boniface. A disciple of Bede asked Lullus, in France, if there were any man in his parish who could make glass vessels well; if such a man lived there, he desired that he might be persuaded to come to England, because, adds he, "we are ignorant and helpless in this art."[54] Bede mentions lamps of glass, and vessels for many uses.[55] Glass became more used in the conveniences of domestic life towards the period of the Norman conquest.

Gold and silver were also applied to adorn their sword-hilts, their saddles and bridles, and their banners.[56] Their gold rings contained gems; and even their garments, saddles, and bridles, were sometimes jewelled.[57]

The presents which the father of Alfred took with him to Rome deserve enumeration, from their value, and because they show the supply of the precious metals which the Anglo-Saxons possessed; we derive the knowlege of them from Anastasius, a contemporary: a crown of the purest gold, weighing four pounds; two basons of the purest gold, weighing * * * * * * pounds; a sword, bound with purest gold; two small images of the purest gold; four dishes of silver gilt; two palls of silk, with golden clasps; with other silk dresses, and gold clasps, and hangings. To the bishops, priests, deacons, and other clergy, and to the great at Rome, he distributed gold, and among the people, small silver.[58] A few years afterwards, we learn from the same author, that the English then at Rome presented to the oratory in the pontifical palace, at Frescati, a silver table,

[54] 16 Mag. Bib. 88.
[55] Bede, p. 295.
[56] Dugd. Mon. 266. ib. 24. Bede, iii. 11.
[57] Aldhelm de Laud. Virg. 307. Eddius, 60. 62. 3 Gale Script. 494. Dugd. Mon. 24.
[58] Anastasius, Bibliot. de Vit. Pontif. p. 403. ed. Rom. 1718.

weighing several pounds.[59] In the age before this, we read of gold and silver vessels sent presents to Rome.[60]

Gold and silver roods, or crosses and crucifixes, are frequently mentioned[61]; also a silver graphium, or pen.[62] The crown of the Anglo-Saxon kings is described by the contemporary biographer of Dunstan as made of gold and silver, and set with various gems.[63] They used iron very commonly, and often tin.

The Anglo-Saxons seem to have been acquainted with the precious stones. In the MSS. Tib. A. 3., twelve sorts of them are thus described:

"The first gem kind is black and green, which are both mingled together; and this is called giaspis. The other is saphyrus; this is like the sun, and in it appear like golden stars. The third is calcedonius; this is like a burning candle. Smaragdus is very green. Sardonix is likest blood. Onichinus is brown and yellow. Sardius is like clear blood. Berillus is like water. Crisoprassus is like a green leek, and green stars seem to shine from it. Topazius is like gold; and carbunculus is like burning fire."

The odoriferous productions of India, and the East, were known to our ancestors, and highly valued. They frequently formed part of their presents. Boniface sent to an abbess a little frankincense, pepper, and cinnamon[64]; to another person some storax and cinnamon.[65] So he received from an archdeacon cinnamon, pepper, and costus.[66] A deacon, at Rome, once sent him four ounces of cinnamon, two ounces of costus, two pounds of pepper, and one pound of cozombri.[67]

The Anglo-Saxons used the luxury of hot baths. Their use seems to have been common; for a nun is

[59] Anastasius Bibliot. de Vit. Pontif. p. 418. ed. Rom. 1718.
[60] Bede, iv. c. 1.
[61] Wulf. Will. ap. Hickes, Diss. Ep. 54. Ingulf, 9. Dugd. 233.
[62] Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 51. [63] MS. Cleop. B. 13.
[64] Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 50. [65] Ibid 51. [66] Ibid. 119.
[67] Ibid. 120. Costus, a kind of shrub growing in Arabia and Persia, and having a root of a pleasant spicy smell.

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mentioned, who, as an act of voluntary mortification, washed in them only on festivals.[68] Not to go to warm baths, nor to a soft bed, was a part of a severe penance.[69] The general practice of this kind of bath may be also inferred, from its being urged by the canons, as a charitable duty, to give to the poor meat, mund, fire, fodder, bed, bathing, and clothes.[70] But while warm bathing was in this use and estimation, we find cold bathing so little valued as to be mentioned as a penitentiary punishment.[71]

The washing of the feet in warm water, especially after travelling, is often mentioned.[72] It was a part of indispensable hospitality to offer this refreshment to a visitor; and this politeness will lead us to suppose, that shoes and stockings, though worn in social life, were little used in travelling. The custom of walking without these coverings in the country, and of putting them on when the traveller approached towns, has existed among the commonalty in North Britain even in the present reign. Among the gifts of Boniface to an Anglo-Saxon prelate, was a shaggy or woolly present, to dry the feet after being washed.[73] To wash the feet of the poor was one of the acts of penance to be performed by the rich.[74]

[68] Bede, iv. c. 19.
[69] Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. 94.
[70] Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. p. 95.
[71] Ibid. 95.
[72] Bede, 234. 251. 257.
[73] 16 Mag. Bib. 52. & ib.
[74] Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. 97.

## CHAP. VII.

### *Their Conviviality and Amusements.*



In the ruder states of society melancholy is the prevailing feature of the mind; the stern or dismal countenances of savages are every where remarkable. Usually the prey of want or passion, they are seldom cheerful till they can riot in excess. Their mirth is then violent and transient; and they soon relapse into their habitual gloom.

As the agricultural state advances, and the comforts of civilisation accumulate, provident industry secures regular supplies; the removal of want diminishes care, and introduces leisure; the softer affections then appear with increasing fervour; the human temper is rendered milder; mirth and joy become habitual; mankind are delighted to indulge their social feelings, and a large portion of time is devoted to amusement.

The Anglo-Saxons were in this happy state of social improvement; they loved the pleasures of the table, but they had the wisdom to unite with them more intellectual diversions. At their cheerful meetings it was the practice for all to sing in turn; and Bede mentions an instance in which, for this purpose, the harp was sent round.[1] The musicians of the day, the wild flowers of their poetry, and the ludicrous jokes and tricks of their buffas, were such essential additions to their conviviality, that the council of Cloveshoe, which thought that more solemn manners were

[1] Bede, lib. iv. p. 170.

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better suited to the ecclesiastic, forbade the monks to suffer their mansions to be the receptacle of the "sportive arts; that is, of poets, harpers, musicians, and buffoons."[2] A previous council, aiming to produce the same effect, had decreed that no ecclesiastic should have harpers, or any music, nor should permit any jokes or plays in their presence.[3] In Edgar's speech on the expulsion of the clergy, the histriones, or gleemen, are noticed as frequenting the monasteries: "There are the dice, there are dancing and singing, even to the very middle of the night."[4] Among the canons made in the same king's reign, a priest was forbidden to be an eala-scop, or an ale-poet, or to any wise gliwige, or play the gleeman with himself or with others.[5] Strutt has given some drawings of the Saxon gleemen from some ancient MSS. I will add his description of the figures.[6]

"We there see a man throwing three balls and three knives alternately into the air, and catching them one by one as they fall, but returning them again in rotation. To give the greater appearance of difficulty to this part, it is accompanied with the music of an instrument resembling the modern violin. It is necessary to add, that these two figures, as well as those dancing, previously mentioned, form a part only of two larger paintings, which, in their original state, are placed as frontispieces to the Psalms of David; in both, the artists have represented that monarch seated upon his throne, in the act of playing upon the harp or lyre, and surrounded by the masters of sacred music. In addition to the four figures upon the middle of the plate, and exclusive of the king, there are four more, all of them instrumental performers; one playing upon the horn, another upon the trumpet, and the other two upon a kind of tabor or drum, which, however, is beaten with a single drumstick. The manuscript in which this illumination is preserved was written as early as the eighth century. The second painting, which is more modern than the former by two full centuries, contains four figures besides the royal psalmist: the two not engraved are musicians; the one is blowing a long trumpet, supported by a staff he holds in his left hand, and the other is winding a crooked horn. In a short prologue immediately

[2] Spel. Concil. 256.
[3] Ibid. 159.
[4] Ethel. Ab. Riev. p. 360.
[5] Ibid. 455.
[6] Strutt's Sports and Pastimes, 132, 133. This book was the last publication of this worthy and industrious man.

preceding the Psalms, we read as follows: David, filius Jesse, in regno suo quatuor elegit qui Psalmos fecerunt, id est Asaph, Æman, Æthan, et Iduthan; which may be thus translated literally: David, the son of Jesse, in his reign, elected four persons who composed psalms; that is to say, Asaph, Æman, Æthan, and Iduthan. In the painting these four names are separately appropriated, one to each of the four personages there represented. The player upon the violin is called Iduthan, and Æthan is tossing up the knives and balls."[7]

Another passage may be cited from the same industrious and worthy author.

"One part of the gleeman's profession, as early as the tenth century, was teaching animals to dance, to tumble, and to put themselves into a variety of attitudes at the command of their masters. Upon the twenty-second plate we see the curious though rude delineation, being little more than an outline, which exhibits a specimen of this pastime. The principal joculator appears in the front, holding a knotted switch in one hand, and a line attached to the bear in the other; the animal is lying down in obedience to his command; and behind them are two more figures, the one playing upon two flutes or flageolets, and elevating his left leg while he stands upon his right, supported by a staff that passes under his arm-pit; the other dancing. This performance takes place upon an eminence resembling a stage, made with earth; and in the original a vast concourse are standing round it in a semicircle as spectators of the sport; but they are so exceedingly ill-drawn, and withal so indistinct, that I did not think it worth the pains to copy them. The dancing, if I may so call it, of the flute-player is repeated twice in the same manuscript. I have thence selected two other figures, and placed them upon the seventeenth plate, where we see a youth playing upon a harp with only four strings, and apparently singing at the same time; while an elderly man is performing the part of a buffoon, or posture-master, holding up one of his legs, and hopping upon the other to the music."[8]

In a Latin MS. of Prudentius, with Saxon notes, there is a drawing which seems to represent a sort of military dance exhibited for public amusement.

"Two men equipped in martial habits, and each of them armed with a sword and shield, are engaged in a combat; the performance is enlivened by the sound of a horn; the musician acts in a double

[7] Strutt's Sports and Pastimes, p. 134.

[8] Ibid. He adds in a note, that "both these drawings occur in a MS. Psalter, written in Latin, and apparently about the middle of the tenth century. It contains many drawings, all of them exceedingly rude, and most of them merely outlines. It is preserved in the Harleian library, and marked 603." His twenty-second plate is in the 182nd page of his work; his seventeenth plate in p. 132., to which we refer the reader.

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capacity, and is, together with a female assistant, dancing round them to the cadence of the music, and probably the actions of the combatants were also regulated by the same measure."[9]

We may remark, that the word commonly used in Anglo-Saxon to express dancing, is the verb, ꝺumbian. The Anglo-Saxon version of the Gospels mentions that the daughter of Herodias ꝺumbuꝺe before Herod; and the Anglo-Saxon word for dancer is ꝺumbeꝛe. It is probable that their mode of dancing included much tumbling.

We may infer that bear-baiting was an amusement of some importance to our ancestors, as it is stated in Doomsday-book, among the annual payments from Norwich, that it should provide one bear, and six dogs for the bear.

It was in the character of a gleeman or, as it was expressed in the Latin term, joculator, that Alfred visited the Danish encampment. That these persons were not only valued, but well rewarded in their day, we learn from a curious fact: Edmund the son of Ethelred, gave a villa to his gleeman, or joculator, whose name was Hitard. This gleeman, in the decline of life, went on a visit of devotion to Rome, and previous to his journey gave the land to the church at Canterbury.[10] In Doomsday-book, Berdic, a joculator of the king, is stated to have possessed three villas in Gloucestershire.

The Anglo-Saxons used a game at hazard, which they called ꝺæꝛl. The ꝺæꝛl-ꝛꝺan, or ꝺæꝛl-ꝛꝺone, was the die. The canons of Edgar forbid priests to be ꝺæꝛleꝛe, or players at the ꝺæꝛl.[11] There is a passage which may be noticed on this subject concerning Canute. A bishop having made a lucrative bargain with a drunken Dane, rode in the night to the king to borrow money to fulfil his contract: it says, "he

[9] Strutt's Sports and Pastimes, p. 166. His plate of it is p. 162. The MS. is in the Cotton Lib. Cleop. C. 8.

[10] Dugdale, Mon. p. 21.

[11] Spelm. Concil. p. 455.

found the king alleviating the tedium of a long night by the play of tesserarum, or scaccorum[12];" he was successful in his application. Whether this play was the ƿæƿl, or any other game more resembling chess, is not clear.

One of their principal diversions was hunting. This is frequently mentioned. A king is exhibited by Bede as standing at the fire with his attendants, and warming himself after hunting.[13] Alfred is praised by his friend Asser for his incomparable skill and assiduity in the arts of the chase.[14] He is stated to have gone as far as Cornwall to enjoy it.[15] The hunt of Edmund, the grandson of Alfred, at Ceoddri, is thus described by a contemporary:—

"When they reached the woods, they took various directions among the woody avenues; and lo, from the varied noise of the horns and the barking of the dogs, many stags began to fly about. From these, the king, with his pack of hounds, selected one for his own hunting, and pursued it long through devious ways with great agility on his horse, and with the dogs following. In the vicinity of Ceoddri were several abrupt and lofty precipices hanging over profound declivities. To one of these the stag came in his flight, and dashed himself down the immense depth with headlong ruin, all the dogs following and perishing with him. The king, pursuing the animal and the hounds with equal energy, was rushing onwards to the precipice: he saw his danger, and struggled violently to stop his courser; the horse disobeyed awhile his rein: he gave up the hope of life, he recommended himself to God and his saint, and was carried to the very brink of destruction before the speed of the animal could be checked. The horse's feet were trembling on the last turf of the precipice, when he stopped."[16]

In the Saxon dialogues above mentioned, we have this conversation on hunting: "I am a hunter to one of the kings."—"How do you exercise your art?" "I spread my nets, and set them in a fit place, and instruct my hounds to pursue the wild deer till they come to the nets unexpectedly, and so are entangled;

[12] Hist. Rames. 3 Gale, p. 442.
[13] Bede, iii. 14.
[14] Asser, p. 16.
[15] Ibid. 40.
[16] Life of Dunstan. Cott. MSS. Cleop. B. 13.

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and I slay them in the nets."—"Cannot you hunt without nets?" "Yes; with swift hounds I follow the wild deer."—"What wild deer do you chiefly take?" "Harts, boars, and rein-deer (rana), and goats, and sometimes hares."—"Did you hunt to-day?" "No, because it was Sunday; but yesterday I did. I took two harts and one boar."—"How?" "The harts in nets, the boar I slew."—"How dared you slay him?" "The hounds drove him to me, and I, standing opposite, pierced him."—"You was bold." "A hunter should not be fearful, because various wild deer live in the woods."—"What do you do with your hunting?" "I give the king what I take, because I am his huntsman."—"What does he give thee?" "He clothes me well, and feeds me, and sometimes gives me a horse or a bracelet, that I may follow my art more lustily."

We have a little information about the royal hunting in Doomsday-book. When the king went to Shrewsbury to hunt, the most respectable burghers who had horses served as his guard, with arms; and the sheriffs sent thirty-six men on foot, to be stationed at the hunt while the king was there. In Hereford, every house sent a man, to be stationed in the wood whenever the king hunted.

Among the drawings in the Saxon calendar in the Cotton library, Tib. B. 5., the month of September represents a boar-hunt: a wood appears, containing boars; a man is on foot with a spear; another appears with a horn slung and applied to his mouth; he has also a spear, and dogs are following.

Hunting was forbidden by Canute on a Sunday.[17] Every man was allowed to hunt in the woods, and in the fields that were his own, but not to interfere with the king's hunting.[18]

[17] Wilkin's Leg. Sax. 130. [18] Ibid. 146.

Hawks and falcons were also favourite subjects of amusement, and valuable presents in those days, when, the country being much overrun with wood, every species of the feathered race abounded in all parts. A king of Kent begged of a friend abroad two falcons of such skill and courage as to attack cranes willingly, and, seizing them, to throw them to the ground. He says, he makes this request, because there were few hawks of that kind in Kent who produced good offspring, and who could be made agile and courageous enough in this art of warfare.[19] Our Boniface sent, among some other presents, a hawk and two falcons to a friend[20]; and we may infer the common use of the diversion from his forbidding his monks to hunt in the woods with dogs, and from having hawks and falcons.[21] An Anglo-Saxon by his will gives two hawks (haꝑocaꝛ), and all his stag-hounds (heaðoꝑ hunðaꝛ), to his natural lord.[22] The sportsmen in the train of the great were so onerous on lands, as to make the exemption of their visit a valuable privilege. Hence a king liberates some lands from those who carry with them hawks or falcons, horses or dogs.[23] The Saxon calendar, in its drawings, represents hawking in the month of October.

Hunting and hawking were for many ages favourite diversions in this island. In the tapestry of Bayeux, Harold appears with his hawk upon his hand. Ethelstan made North Wales furnish him with as many dogs as he chose, " whose scent-pursuing noses might

[19] Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 65.
[20] Ibid. p. 53.
[21] Ibid. p. 94.
[22] Thorpe's Reg. Roff. p. 24.
[23] Cott. MS. Claud. C. 9. p. 104. It was one of the distinctions of their rank for the Anglo-Saxon nobles and gentry to appear in public with their birds on their hands. This custom prevailed in England as long as falconry was in fashion. Gascoigne mentions it in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. We find the same habit in Arabia now. In crossing the desert, Mr. Hamilton met an Arab Bey attended by four men well armed and mounted. These carried hawks on their wrists, and were followed by several greyhounds. Keppel's Journey from India, 1826.

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explore the haunts and coverts of the deer;" and he also exacted birds, "who knew how to hunt others along the atmosphere."[24] A nobleman is mentioned, who frequented his estates near woods and marshes, because it was convenient for hunting and hawking.[25] This was the fashion of the times; and even the meek and impassive Edward the Confessor is exhibited as pursuing his deer when he was thwarted by a rustic whom he desired to punish, but that his simple mind knew not that he had the power.[26] The chief delights of this king were, the coursing of swift hounds, whose clamour during the sport he was eager to cheer, and the flights of birds whose nature it is to pursue their kindred prey. Every day, after his morning devotions, he indulged in these exercises.[27]

The Saxon dialogues thus speak of the fowler: "How do you deceive fowls?" "Many ways; sometimes with nets, sometimes with gins, sometimes with lime, sometimes whistling, sometimes with hawks, sometimes with traps."—"Have you a hawk?" "I have."—"Can you tame them?" "I can: what use would they be to me, if I could not tame them?"—"Give me a hawk." "I will give it willingly, if you will give me a swift hound; which hawk will you have, the greater or the less?"—"The greater: how do you feed them?" "They feed themselves and me in winter, and in spring I let them fly to the woods. I take for myself young ones in harvest, and tame them."—"And why do you let them fly from you when tamed?" "Because I will not feed them in summer, as they eat too much."—"But many feed and keep them tame through the summer, that they may again have them ready." "So they do, but I will not have that trouble about them, as I can take many others."[28]

[24] Malmsb. lib. ii. p. 50.
[25] Hist. Ram. 3 Gale Scrip. p. 404.
[26] Malmsb. lib. ii. c. 13. p. 79.
[27] Ibid. p. 91.
[28] Cotton MS. Tib. A. 3.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Their Marriages.*

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It is well known that the female sex were much more highly valued, and more respectfully treated by the barbarous Gothic nations, than by the more polished states of the East. Among the Anglo-Saxons, they occupied the same important and independent rank in society which they now enjoy.

They were allowed to possess, to inherit, and to transmit landed property; they shared in all the social festivities: they were present at the witena gemot and the shire gemot; they were permitted to sue and be sued in the courts of justice; their persons, their safety, their liberty, and their property were protected by express laws; and they possessed all that sweet influence which, while the human heart is responsive to the touch of love, they will ever retain in those countries which have the wisdom and the urbanity to treat them as equal, intelligent, and independent beings.

The earliest institutions respecting the Anglo-Saxon marriages occur in the laws of Ethelbert. According to these, a man might purchase a woman, if the agreement were made without fraud; but if deceit were detected, she was to be taken back to her house, and his money was to be restored to him. It was also enjoined, that if a wife brought forth children alive, and survived her husband, she was to have half his property. She was allowed the same privilege, if she chose, to live with her children; but if she were

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childless, his paternal relations were to have his possessions, and the morgen gift.[1]

The customary forms attendant upon their marriage-contracts are more clearly displayed to us in the laws of Edmund; the consent of the lady and her friends was to be first obtained; the bridegroom[2] was then to give his promise, and his pledge, to the person who spoke for her, that he desired her, that he might keep her, according to the law of God, as a man ought to keep his wife. Nor was this promise trusted to his own honour or interest: the female sex were so much under the protection of the law, that the bridegroom was compelled to produce friends who gave their security for his due observance of his covenant. The parties being thus betrothed, the next step was to settle to whom the foster lean, the money requisite for the nourishing the children, should be applied. The bridegroom was then required to pledge himself to this, and his friends became responsible for him.

This matter being arranged, he was then to signify what he meant to give her for choosing to be his wife, and what he should give her in case she survived him. I consider the first gift to be a designation of his intended morgen gift. This was the present which the Anglo-Saxon wives received from their husbands on the day after their nuptials, as it is expressed in the law. It seems to have been intended as a compliment to the ladies for honouring a suitor with their preference, and for submitting to the duties of wedlock. The law adds, that, if it be so agreed, it is right that she should halve the property, or have the whole if they had children together, unless she

[1] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 7.

[2] The Saxon word is bryð-guma. Luma means a man, which we have perverted into groom; bryð implies marriage. The Welsh for marriage is priodas; priodvab is a bridegroom; priodi, to marry; all these in composition change into an initial b. No one can suspect that such a term as this can by either nation have been derived from the other. But the Welsh has preserved the rationale of the word, which implies appropriation, or proprietorship.

chose again another husband. This was an improvement on the ancient law, which, in the event of no issue, had directed the morgen gift to be returned.

The bridegroom was then required to confirm with his pledge all that he had promised, and his friends were to become responsible for its due performance.

These preliminaries being settled, they proceeded to the marriage. Her relations then took and wedded her to wife, and to a right life, with him who desired her; and the person appointed to keep the pledges that had been given, took the security for them. For the more complete assurance of the lady's personal safety and comfort, in those days wherein a multiplicity of jurisdictions gave often impunity to crime, the friends who took the pledges were authorized to become guarantee to her, that if her husband carried her into another thane's land, he would do her no injury; and that, if she did wrong, they would be ready to answer the compensation, if she had nothing from which she could pay it.

The law proceeds to direct, that the mass-priest should be present at the marriage and should consecrate their union with the divine blessing to every happiness and prosperity.[3] There is an article in one of the collections of ecclesiastical canons, "How man shall bless the bridegroom and the bride."[4]

The Anglo-Saxon remains will furnish us with some illustrations of the pecuniary contracts which attended their marriages. We will give one document at length, as it may be called an Anglo-Saxon lady's marriage-settlement.

"There appears in this writing the compact which Wulfric and the archbishop made when he obtained the archbishop's sister for his wife. It is, that he promised her the land at Ealretune and at Rebbedforda for her life, and promised her the land at Cnihtewica; that he would obtain it for her for the lives of three men

[3] Wilk. Leg Sax. pp. 75, 76.

[4] MS. CCC. Cantab. S. xii. c. 71.

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from the monastery at Wincelcumbe; and he gave her the land at Eanulfin-tune to give and to grant to those that were dearest to her during life, and after her life to those that were dearest to her; and he promised her fifty mances of gold, and thirty men and thirty horses. Now of this were to witness Wulfstan the archbishop, and Leofwin the ealdorman, and Æthelstan bishop, and Ælford abbot, and Briteh monk, and many good men in addition to them, both ecclesiastics and laymen, that this compact was thus made. Now of this compact there are two writings; one with the archbishop at Wigere ceaster, and another with Æthelstan, the bishop at Herford."[5]

Without deviating into an exposition of the customs of other nations as to the morgen[6] gift, we will state a few circumstances concerning it from our own documents. It is frequently mentioned in ladies' wills: thus Wynfleda, bequeathing some land at Faccancumb, calls it her morgen gifu.[7] So Elfleda, in her will, says, "Rettendun that was my morgen gyfu;"[8] and Elfhelm, in his will, has this passage: "And I declare what I gave to my wife for her morgen give; that is, Beadewan, and Burge stede, and Strætford, and the three hides at Hean-healem." The same testator notices an additional present that he had made his wife on her nuptials: "And I gave to her, when we two first came together, the two hides at Wilburgeham, and at Hrægenan, and that thereto lieth."[9] The morgen gift was therefore a settlement on the lady very similar to a modern jointure. It was bargained for before marriage, but was not actually vested in the wife till afterwards. Our conception of the thing will be probably simplified and assisted by recollecting the language of our modern settlements. The land or property conveyed by them is given in trust for

[5] This may be seen in Wanley's Catalogue, p. 302., and Hickes's Diss. Ep. 76. Wulfstan died 1023.

[6] Henry's observations on the marriage of our ancestors are very discursive, and relate rather to other nations than to the Anglo-Saxons. See his vol. iii. p. 393, &c. The reader of Henry will frequently have occasion to recollect this.

[7] See her will. Hickes's Pref. xxii.

[8] See Lye, Sax. Dict. voc. morgen gife.

[9] See his will at length, from Mr. Astle's collection, in the second appendix to the Saxon Dictionary.

the person who grants it "until the said marriage shall take effect; and from and immediately after the solemnization thereof," it is then granted to the uses agreed upon. So the morgen gift was settled before the nuptials, but was not actually given away until the morning afterwards, or until the marriage was completed.

Nothing could be more calculated to produce a very striking dissimilarity between the Gothic nations and the Oriental states, than this exaltation of the female sex to that honour, consequence, and independence which European laws studied to uphold. As the education of youth will always rest principally with women, in the most ductile part of life, it is of the greatest importance that the fair sex should possess high estimation in society; and nothing could more certainly tend to perpetuate this feeling, than the privilege of possessing property in their own right, and at their own disposal.

That the Anglo-Saxon ladies both inherited and disposed of property as they pleased, appears from many instances: a wife is mentioned who devised land by her will, with the consent of her husband in his life-time.[10] We read also of land which a wife had sold in her husband's life.[11] We frequently find wives the parties to a sale of land[12]; and still oftener we read of estates given to women, or devised by men of affluence to their wives.[13] Widows selling property is also a common[14] occurrence; so is the incident of women devising it.[15] That they inherited land is also clear, for a case is mentioned wherein,

[10] Hist Ram. 3 Gale, 460.

[11] Ibid. 466.

[12] Ibid. 472. 474, 475. 408.

[13] 3 Gale, 441. 407, 408.; and see the wills of Ælfred Dux, and of Elfhelm, in Sax. Dict. App. 2. and several Saxon grants.

[14] 3 Gale, 468.

[15] Ibid. 471. See the charta of Eadgifa in Sax. Dict. App. and of Wynfleda ap. Hickes.

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there being no male heir, the estate went to a female.[16] Women appear as tenants in capite in Doomsday.

There are many instances of land being granted to both husband and wife.[17] The queens frequently join in the charters with the kings[18]; and it is once mentioned, that a widow and the heirs were sued for her husband's debts.[19] Indeed, the instances of women having property transferred to them, and also of their transmitting it to others, surround us on all sides. To name only a few: a king's mother gave five hides to a noble matron, which she gave to a monastery.[20] When a bishop had bought some lands of a husband and a wife, he fixed a day when she should come and surrender them, because she had the greater right to the land by a former husband.[21] A mother bequeathed property to two of her daughters; and to her third daughter, Leosware, she gave an estate at Weddreringesete, on the reproachful condition, that she should keep herself chaste, or marry, that she and her progeny might not be branded with the infamy of the contagion of prostitution.[22]

In the oldest Anglo-Saxon law, widows were protected by an express regulation. Four ranks are mentioned: an eorlcund's widow, another sort, a third and fourth sort. Their tranquillity invaded was to be punished by fines adapted to their quality, as fifty shillings, twenty, twelve, and six shillings.[23]

They were also guarded from personal violence. If any took a widow without her consent, he was to be fined a double mulct.[24] It was also expressly for-

[16] Ingulf, p. 39.
[17] As in Claud. B. 6. p. 38. So Offa gives land to his minister and his sister. Astle, No. 7. ib. 8.
[18] Astle's Charters, 48.; and Heming, p. 9, &c.
[19] 3 Gale, 468. [20] Ibid. 481. [21] Ibid. 472.
[22] Ibid. 507. So Alfred in his will gives estates to his three daughters, and also money.
[23] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 7. [24] Ibid.

bidden to any one to marry a woman if she were unwilling.[25]

The morgen gift was not left optional to the husband to give or withhold after the marriage. One of the laws of Ina expressly provides, that if a man bargained for a woman, and the gyft was not duly forthcoming, he should actually pay the money, and also a penalty and a compensation to her sureties for breaking his troth.[26] The morgen gift was also the means by which they punished widows who married too early. Twelve months was the legal term prescribed for widowhood. By Ethelred's law, every widow who kept herself in the peace of God and of the king, and who remained twelve months without a husband, might choose afterwards as she pleased.[27] But by a subsequent law, if she married within the year, she lost her morgen gift, and all the property which she derived from her first husband.[28]

These pecuniary bargains which were made on the Anglo-Saxon marriages do not breathe much of the spirit of affectionate romance. The men, however, cannot be called mercenary suitors, as they appear to have been the paymasters. These contracts give occasion to the Saxon legislators to express the fact of treating for a marriage by the terms of buying a wife. Hence our oldest law says, if a man buys a maiden, the bargain shall stand if there be no deceit; otherwise, she should be restored to her home, and his money shall be returned to him.[29] So, in the penalty before mentioned annexed to the non-payment of the morgen gift, the expression used is, if a man buys a wife.[30] In this kind of marriage-bargains it was a necessary protection extended to the lover, that the same law which forbade the compelling a woman to

[25] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 145. [26] Ibid. 20. [27] Ibid. 109. 122.
[28] Ibid. 145. [29] Ibid. 7. [30] Ibid. 19.

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marry the man she disliked, also, as an impartial counterpart of justice, directed that a man should not be forced to give his money, unless he was desirous to bestow it of his own free will.[31] There is another passage which tends to express, that marriage was considered as the purchase of the lady. "If a freeman cohabit with the wife of a freeman, he must pay the were, and obtain another woman with his own money, and lead her to the other."[32] In this point, we have greatly improved on the customs, or at least the language of our ancestors. Pecuniary considerations and arrangements are still important formulas preceding marriages; but ladies frequently bring their husband property, instead of receiving it; and if they do not, their affection and attentions are his dearest treasure. They are not now either bought or sold, unless where interest counterfeits affection.

After adding that marriages were forbidden within certain degrees of consanguinity[33], we have only the unpleasing task remaining of mentioning the penalties which were attached to the violation of female chastity.

If a slave committed a rape on a female slave, he was punished with a corporal mutilation. If any one compelled an immature maiden, he was to abide the same punishment. Whoever violated a ceorl's wife, was to pay him five shillings, and be fined sixty shillings.[34]

For adultery with the wife of a twelve hundred man, the offender was to pay one hundred and twenty shillings; and one hundred shillings for the wife of a six hundred man, and forty shillings for a ceorl's wife. This might be paid in live property, and no man might sell another for it. For the degrees of intimacy

[31] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 145.
[32] Ibid. 4.
[33] Ibid. 52. 129.
[34] Ibid. 40.

with a ceorl's wife, which are specified, various fines were exacted.[35]

The earliest Saxon laws were attentive to this vice: in those of Ethelred fifty shillings were the appointed penalty for intimacy with the king's maiden, half that sum with his grinding servant, and twelve shillings with another, or with an earl's cup-bearer. The chastity of a ceorl's attendant was guarded by six shillings, and of inferior servants by the diminished penalty of fifty and thirty scættas.[36]

By the same laws for a rape on a servile woman, the offender was to pay her owner fifty shillings, and then to buy her at the will of her owner. If she was pregnant, he was to pay thirty-five shillings, and fifteen shillings to the king, and twenty shillings if betrothed to another.[37]

Their high estimation and rigorous exaction of female virtue, even among the servile, is strongly implied in this passage of one of Bede's works:

"In the courts of princes there are certain men and women moving continually in more splendid vestments, and retaining a greater familiarity with their lord and lady. There it is studiously provided, that none of the women there who are in an enslaved state should remain with any stain of unchastity; but if by chance she should turn to the eyes of men with an immodest aspect, she is immediately chided with severity. There some are deputed to the interior, some to the exterior offices, all of whom carefully observe the duties committed to them, that they may claim nothing but what is so entrusted." V. viii. p. 1067.

[35] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 37. [36] Ibid. p. 3. [37] Ibid. p. 7.

## CHAP. IX.

*Classes and Condition of Society.*

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EVERY man in the Anglo-Saxon society beneath the cyning and his family was in one of these classes. He was either in high estimation from his birth; or he was in a state of dignity from office, or from property; or he was a free-man; or a freed-man; or he was in one of the servile classes. Thus inequality was as much the character of the Anglo-Saxon society as of our own superior civilisation.

The inequality of society is the source of perpetual discontent, both against government and Providence; and yet from this inequality have arisen all the comforts that cause us to be displeased with it. In natural birth, in natural powers, in natural merit, in the womb and in the grave, we are all equal; but it is in nature an equality of destitution and want; of capability and desire; of the necessity of exertion; of destiny and hope. Mankind began their mortal race alike both in privation and in power. Nature extended her riches impartially before all. She favoured neither of her first-born sons. The materials of all the conveniences of life, which civilisation has since acquired, were present to every eye, and attainable by every hand.

But the very freedom of mind and action with which nature has blessed mankind, and the impulse of the privations amid which we originated, soon terminated this equality of want, and began the acquisition of comforts and abundance. No man has from nature any advantages above his fellows: no one comes into life with four arms, or twenty eyes: none

leap into birth armed and full-formed Minervas; but all being free to use their capabilities as they please, the exertion of this liberty produced inevitable inequality in anterior times, as in every subsequent age. It is not merely that the industrious will amass more conveniences than the idle, the provident more than the careless, the economist than the profuse; but the different tastes and feelings of men throw them into different social positions both of rank and property. The hunter and the fowler will not raise stores of corn like the husbandman, nor can he acquire the riches and commodities of the merchant. The warrior, abandoning the paths which the preceding characters prefer, cannot therefore, of himself, obtain the comforts which they value and pursue, but gains an estimation and consequence in the social talk, which gratifies him more than the ship-loads of foreign commerce, or the replenished granaries of the agriculturist. The artisan, attached to his humble but cherished tranquillity, neither feels nor envies the dangerous honours of the soldier, nor the risks and sufferings of the trading navigator. Thus mankind, obeying the tendency of their various dispositions, fill social life with inequality, and, by pursuing such diversified roads, are for ever multiplying the conveniences and enjoyments of life, though the dissimilar acquisition of these, from the exertion of individual liberty of will and action, is perpetually augmenting the inequality complained of. The truth is, that, by these various pursuits, the comforts of every class, even of the lowest, are inconceivably increased. Our common farmers now fare better than the thegns and knights of the Anglo-Saxon days; and the cottages of our day-labourers have many more conveniences, and their life fewer privations, than most of the Anglo-Saxon classes of society enjoyed below the baron, the thegn, and the knight, and some even

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which the latter of these had not: to instance only one circumstance—the comforts of a chimney and its cleanliness. Most of our early ancestors lived at home amid smoke and dirt, with one of which, at least, life would, to the poorest among us, seem intolerable; yet Alcuin, the Anglo-Saxon abbot who was reproached for having ten thousand slaves or vassal peasantry at his command, lived in an habitation sordid with smoke, and affecting his eyes, which he refused to quit for the gilded arched roofs of Italy[1], the remains of Roman luxury, to which the emperor invited him.

It is the glory of civilised life, for the more successful possessor of its advantages to diffuse them, from his own stores, as far as he is able, wherever he observes them to be painfully deficient.

Dignity by Birth.

There was certainly among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors a personal distinction arising from birth. Individuals are described in these times as noble by descent.[2] The expression ethelboren, or noble born, occurs several times, even in the laws.[3] A very forcible passage on this subject appears in the life of St. Guthlac: "There was a noble (ethela) man in the high nation of the Mercians; he was of the oldest race, and the noblest (æthelstan) that was named Iclingas."[4] The sense of this cannot be mistaken: a family is expressly distinguished from the rest by an appropriated name, "Iclingas." We may recollect here that Iornandes says of the Goths, that they had a noble race, called the Balthæ, from whence Alaric sprung.[5] In the canons of Edgar, another decisive

[1] He writes to the emperor, who had urged him to visit Rome: "You blame me for preferring the houses of Tours, sordid with smoke, to the gilded arches of the Romans; I would say, with your leave, that iron (swords) hurts the eyes more than smoke. Contented with the smoky houses, I remain here in peace." Ep. xiii. p. 1507.

[2] 3 Gale Script. 395. 417, 418.

[3] MS. Vesp. D. 14. p. 36. 120. and Wilk. Leg. Sax. 37.

[4] MS. Vesp. D. 21. p. 19.

[5] See Vol. I. of this work.

passage attests, that superiority of birth was felt to convey superior consequence; for it was found necessary to require "that no forth-boren priest despise one that is less born, because, if men think rightly, all men are of one origin."[6] No peculiar titles, as with us, seem to have distinguished the nobly born; they were rather marked out to their fellows by that name of the family which had become illustrious, as the Fabii and Cornelii of the Romans. Their title was formed by the addition of *ing* to the name of the ancestor whose fame produced their glory. Thus from Uffa his posterity was called[7] Uffingas. So Beowulf, the hero of an Anglo-Saxon poem, was one of the Scyldingas.

Beowulf was illustrious;
The fruit wide sprang
Of the posterity of the Scylde.

---

Then was in the burghs
Beowulf, the Scyldinga,
The dear king of his people.

---

With them the Scyld
Departed to the ship,
While many were prone to go
In the path of their lord.
They him then bore
To the journey of the ocean
As his companions,
He himself commanded;
Whence with words they governed
The Scyldinga of battle.[8]

The birth that was thought illustrious conferred personal honour, but no political rank or power. No title was attached to it which descended by heirship and gave a perpetuity of political privileges. That was a later improvement. In theoretical reasoning, and in the eye of religion, the distinction of birth seems to be an unjust prejudice; we have all, as our

[6] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 83.
[7] Polych. Higd. 3 Gale, p. 224.
[8] MS. Cott. Lib. Vit. A. 15. p. 129, 130.

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Great Alfred and Boetius sang, one common ancestor, and the same Creator, Protector, and Judge; but the morality and merit of society is the product of very complicated and diversified motives, and is never so superabundant as to suffer uninjured the loss of any one of its incentives and supports. The fame of an applauded ancestor has stimulated many to perform noble actions, or to preserve an honourable character, and will continue so to operate while human nature exists. It creates a sentiment of honour, a dread of disgrace, an useful pride of name, which, though not universally efficient, will frequently check the vicious propensities of passion or selfishness, when reason or religion has exhorted in vain. The distinction of birth may be therefore added to the exaltation of the female sex, as another of those peculiarities which have tended to extract from the barbarism of the Gothic nations a far nobler character than any that the rich climates of the East could rear.

By property;

That there was a nobility from landed property, distinct from that of birth, attainable by every one, and possessing (what noble birth had not of itself) political rank and immunities, is clear, from several passages. It is mentioned in the laws, as an incentive to proper actions, that through God's gift a servile thræl may become a thane, and a ceorl an eorl, just as a singer may become a priest, and a bocere (a writer) a bishop.[9] In the time of Ethelstan it is expressly declared, that if a ceorl have the full proprietorship of five hides of his own land, a church, and kitchen, a bell-house, a burghate-seat, and an appropriate office in the king's hall, he shall thenceforth be a thegn, or thane, by right.[10] The same laws provide that a thegn may arrive at the dignity of an eorl, and that a

[9] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 112.

[10] Ibid. 70.

massere, or merchant, who went three times over sea with his own craft, might become a thegn.[11] But the most curious passage on this subject is that which attests, that without the possession of a certain quantity of landed property, the dignity of sitting in the witena-gemot could not be enjoyed, not even though the person was noble already. An abbot of Ely had a brother who was courting the daughter of a great man; but the lady refused him, because, although noble, he had not the lordship of forty hides, and therefore could not be numbered among the proceres or witena. To enable him to gratify his love and her ambition, the abbot conveyed to him certain lands, belonging to his monastery. The nuptials took place, and the fraud was for some time undiscovered.[12]

The principle of distinguishing men by their property is also established in the laws. Thus we read of twyhyndum, of sixhyndum, and of twelfhyndum men.[13] A twyhynde man was level in his were with a ceorl[14], and a twelfhynde with a thegn[15]; and yet Canute calls both these classes his thegns.[16] But though property might confer distinction, yet it was the possession of landed property which raised a man to those titles which might be called ennobling. Hence it is mentioned that though a ceorl should attain to a helmet, mail, and a gold-hilted sword, yet if he had no land he must still remain a ceorl.[17]

The species of nobility which was gained by official dignities appears to have appertained to the eal-

[11] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 70.
[12] Hist. Eliens. 3 Gale, Scrip. 513.
[13] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 25. 33.
[14] Ibid. 64., and 3 Gale, 423.
[15] Leg. Sax. 16.
[16] "I Cnut, king, greet Lyfing, archbishop; and Æthelwine, *shireman*, and all my thegns, twelf-hynde and twi-hynde friendlily." Wanley, Cott. MSS. p. 181.
[17] Leg. Sax. 71.

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dorman, the eorl, the heretoch, and the thegn, when he was a king's thegn. A certain portion of rank was also conceded to the gerefa and the scir-reve. There was a still inferior degree of consequence derived from being ealdor of an hundred, and such like minor offices, which the laws sometimes recognise.[18]

By office.

The dignity from office conferred some beneficial distinction on the family of the person possessing it; for the laws speak of an eorlcunde widow, and defend her by exacting compensations, for wrongs committed against her, much superior to those of other women.[19]

Official dignities were conferred by the king, and were liable to be taken away by him on illegal conduct. This is the language with which, according to Asser, Alfred addressed his great men: "I wonder at your audacity, that by the gift of God, and by my gift, you have assumed the ministry and the degree of the wise men, and yet have neglected the study and labour of wisdom. Therefore I command, either that you lay aside the ministry of earthly power which you enjoy, or that you study wisdom more attentively."[20] In the laws we find an ealdorman threatened with the loss of his shire, unless the king pardon him, for conniving at the escape of a thief.[21] So a thegn is threatened with the perpetual loss of his thegnship for an unjust judgment, unless he prove by oath that he knew not how to give a better decision. But the king in this case also had the option of restoring him.[22] In the same manner the gerefas are menaced with the deprivation of their post of honour, on committing the offences described in the law.[23] The exact nature

[18] As in the ealdor of the hundred. Leg. Sax. 81.
[19] Leg. Sax. 7.
[20] Asser, Vit. Ælf. 71.
[21] Leges Inæ, p. 20.
[22] Leges Edgari, p. 78., et Cnuti, p. 135.
[23] Leg. Sax. 69.

and duties of these dignified officers will be considered more minutely under the head of government.[24]

The rest of the Anglo-Saxon society consisted of three descriptions of men; the free, the freed, and the servile.

Freemen.

In talking of the Anglo-Saxon freemen, we must not let our minds expatiate on an ideal character which eloquence and hope have invested with charms almost magical. No utopian state, no paradise of such a pure republic as reason can conceive, but as human nature can neither establish nor support, is about to shine around us when we describe the Anglo-Saxon freeman. A freeman among our ancestors was not that dignified independent being, "lord of the lion heart and eagle eye," which our poets fancy under this appellation: he was rather an Anglo-Saxon not in the servile state; not property attached to the land as the slaves were. He was freed from the oppression of arbitrary bondage: he was often a servant, and a master, but he had the liberty to quit the service of one lord and choose another.

That the Anglo-Saxon freemen were frequently servants, and had their masters, may be proved by a variety of passages in our ancient remains: "If any give flesh to his servants on fast-days, whether they be free or servile, he must compensate for the pillory."[25] So, in the laws of Ina, "If a freeman work on a Sunday without his lord's orders, he shall lose his liberty, or pay sixty shillings."[26] That freemen were

[24] A curious privilege allowed to the great may be here noticed. This was, that his friends might do penance for him. The laws of Edgar state that "a mighty man, if rich in friends, may thus with their aid lighten his penance." He was first to make his confession, and begin his penance with much groaning. "Let him then lay aside his arms and his idle apparel, and put on hair-cloth, and take a staff in his hand, and go barefoot, and not enter a bed, but lie in his court-yard." If this penance was imposed for seven years, he might take to his aid twelve men, and fast three days on bread, green herbs, and water. He might then get seven times one hundred and twenty men, whomsoever he could, who should all fast three days, and thus make up as many days of penance as there are days in seven years, p. 97. Thus a penance of seven years might be got through in a week.

[25] Leg. Wihtrædi, 11.

[26] Leg. Inæ, 15.

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in laborious and subordinate conditions, is also strongly implied by a law of Alfred, which says, "These days are forgiven to all freemen, excepting servants and working slaves." The days were, twelve days at Christmas, Passion week, and Easter week, and a few others.[27] An Anglo-Saxon, in a charter, says, with all my men, both servile and freemen.[28]

Their state of freedom had great benefits and some inconveniences. A slave being the property of another, his master was responsible for his delinquencies; but a freeman, not having a lord to pay for him, was obliged to be under perpetual bail or sureties, who engaged to produce him whenever he should be accused.[29] Being of more personal consideration in society, his mulcts were proportionably greater. If he stole from the king, he was obliged to pay a nine-fold compensation[30]; if a freeman stole from a freeman, he was to compensate three-fold, and all his goods and the penalty were to go to the king.[31] The principle of greater compensation from the free than the servile pervades our ancient laws.

But the benefits of freedom are at all times incalculable, and have been happily progressive. If they had been no more than the power of changing their master at their own pleasure, as our present domestic servants do, even this was a most valuable privilege; and this they exercised. We have an instance of a certain huntsman mentioned, who left the lordship of his master and his land, and chose himself another lord.[32]

They had many other advantages; their persons were frequently respected in their punishments; thus a theow who broke an appointed fast might be whipped, but a freeman was to pay a mulct.[33] It was no small

[27] Leg. Ælf. 44.
[28] Thorpe, Reg. Roff. 357.
[29] Leg. Ethelr. 102.
[30] Leg. Ethelb. 2.
[31] Ibid.
[32] MS. Charters of the late Mr. Astle, 28.
[33] Leg. Sax. p. 53.

benefit that the king was their legal lord and patron: "If any kill a freeman, the king shall receive fifty shillings for lordship."[34] Upon the same principle, if a freeman were taken with a theft in his hand, the king had a choice of the punishment to be inflicted on him; he might kill him, he might sell him over sea, or receive his wære.[35] That they were valued and protected by our ancient legislation, is evident from the provision made for their personal liberty: whoever put a freeman into bonds was to forfeit twenty shillings.[36]

This happy state of freedom might, however, be lost: the degradation from liberty to slavery was one of the punishments attached to the free. We have mentioned already, that one offence which incurred it was violating the Sabbath. A freeman reduced to slavery by the penalties of law was called a wite theow[37], a penal slave. Under this denomination he occurs in the laws, and is frequently mentioned in wills. Thus Wynfleda, directing the emancipation of some slaves, extends the same benevolence to her wite theow, if there be any.[38] So an archbishop directs all such to be freed who in his time had been mulcted of their liberty.[39] A freeman so reduced to slavery became again subject to corporal punishment; for it was ordered, that one who had stolen while free, might receive stripes from his prosecutor. It was also ordered, that if, while a wite theow, he stole, he was to be hanged.[40]

Slaves.

It is well known that a large proportion of the Anglo-Saxon population was in a state of slavery. This unfortunate class of men, who were called theow

[34] Leg. Sax. p. 2. [35] Ibid. p. 12. [36] Ibid. p. 3.

[37] Ibid. p. 22. Hence the will of archbishop Elfric says, "If any one according to the custom of England shall have incurred the penalty of any slavery," he ordered him to be freed. Cott. MSS. Claud. c. ix. p. 126.

[38] Hickes, Pref. Gram. [39] MS. Claud. c. ix. p. 125.

[40] Leg. Sax. 22. and p. 18.

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thræl, men, and esne, are frequently mentioned in our ancient laws and charters, and are exhibited in the servile condition of being another's property, without any political existence or social consideration.

They were bought and sold with land, and were conveyed in the grants of it promiscuously with the cattle and other property upon it. Thus, in an enumeration of property on an estate, it is said there were a hundred sheep, fifty-five swine, two men, and five yoked oxen.[41] At another time we find some land given up without injury to any thing belonging to it, whether men, cattle, or food.[42] So one bought land for thirty pounds, and gave seven pounds more for all the things on it, as men, stock, and corn.[43]

In the Anglo-Saxon wills these wretched beings are given away precisely as we now dispose of our plate, our furniture, or our money. An archbishop bequeaths some land to an abbey, with ten oxen and two men.[44] Ælfhelm bequeaths his chief mansion at Gyrstingthorpe, with all the property that stood thereon, both provisions and men.[45] Wynfleda, in her will, gives to her daughter the land at Ebbelesburn, and those men, the property, and all that thereon be; afterwards she gives "to Eadmær as much property and as many men as to him had been bequeathed before at Hafene."[46] In another part of her will she says, "Of those theowan men at Cinnuc, she bequeaths to Eadwold, Ceolstan the son of Elstan, and the son of Effa, and Burwhyn Mærtin; and she bequeaths to Eadgyfu, Ælfsige the cook, and Tefl the daughter of Wareburga, and Herestan and his wife, and Ecelm and his wife and their child, and Cynestan, and Wynsige, and the son of Bryhtric, and

[41] 3 Gale, Script. 481. [42] Heming. Chartul. p. 166.
[43] 3 Gale, 478.; and see the letter of Lullius, Bib. Mag. Pat. vol. xvi. p. 92.
[44] MS. Cott. c. ix. p. 125.; and see 1 Dug. M. 306.
[45] Test. Elfhelmi. App. Sax. Dict. [46] Test. Wynfl. Hickes, Pref.

Edwyn, and the son of Bunel, and the daughter of Ælfwer." Wulfgar in his will says, "I give to Ælfere abbot the lands at Ferscesford, with the provisions, and with the men, and with all the produce as it is cultivated." This will contains several bequests of this sort.[47]

Their servile state was attended with all the horrors of slavery, descending on the posterity of the subjected individuals. A duke in Mercia added to a donation "six men, who formerly belonged to the royal villa in Berhtanwellan, with all their offspring and their family, that they may always belong to the land of the aforesaid church in perpetual inheritance." To this gift is added the names of the slaves. "These are the names of those men that are in this writing, with their offspring, and their family that come from them in perpetual heritage: Alhmund, Tidulf, Tidheh, Lull, Lull, Eadwulf."[48] That whole families were in a state of slavery appears most satisfactorily from the instruments of manumission which remain to us. In them we find a man, his wife, and their offspring, frequently redeemed together; and in Wynfleda's will, the wives and daughters of some slaves she names are directed to be emancipated. Ethelstan, after stating that he freed Eadelm, because he had become king, adds, "and I give to the children the same benefit as I give to the father."

Some of the prices of slaves appear in the written contracts of their purchase which have survived.

"Here is declared in this book, that Ediwic, the widow of Sæwgels, bought Gladu at Colewin for half a pound, for the price and the toll; and Ælword, the port gerefa, took the toll; and thereto was witness Leowin, brother of Leoword, and Ælwi blaca, and Ælwin the king, and Landbiriht, and Alca, and Sæwerd; and may he have God's curse for ever that this ever undoes. Amen."

[47] Test. Wulf. Hickes, Diss. Ep. 54.

[48] Heming. Chart. Wig. p. 61, 62.: and for the next paragraphs see Hickes, Diss. Ep. p. 12., and his Preface; and Wanley's Catalogue, p. 181.

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So Egelsig bought Wynric of an abbot for an yre of gold; another was bought for three mancusæ."[49] The tolls mentioned in some of the contracts for slaves may be illustrated out of Domesday-book. In the burgh of Lewis it says, that at every purchase and sale, money was paid to the gerefa: for an ox, a farthing was collected: for a man, four pennies.

That the Anglo-Saxons were sold at Rome we learn from the well-known anecdote mentioned by Bede, of Pope Gregory seeing them in the markets there. We also read of one being sold in London to a Frisian[50]; and of a person in France relieving many from slavery, especially Saxons, probably continental Saxons, who then abounded in that country.[51] It was expressly enjoined in one of the later laws, that no Christians, or innocent man, should be sold from the land.[52] They appear to have been very numerous. It is mentioned that there were two hundred and fifty slaves, men and women, in the lands given by the king to Wilfrid.[53] But to have a just idea of

[49] Hickes, Diss. p. 12.; and App. Sax. Dict. In the act of purchase, by which Hunnifloh bought Wulfgytha, it is added, "and the brown beadle took the toll." Cott. MSS. Tib. B. 5. As specimens of prices we may add, that Sydefleda was sold for five shillings and some pence; Sæthrytha for three mancusæ; Alfgytha and Gunnilda, each for half a pound. MSS. C. C. C. Cant. Wanley, Cat. p. 116.

[50] Bede, 166.

[51] Bouquet's Recueil des Historiens, tom. iii. p. 553.

[52] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 107. "Some young men were exported from Northumberland to be sold, according to a custom which seems to be natural to the people of that country, of selling their nearest relations for their own advantage." — Malmsb. lib. i. c. 3. "There is a seaport town, called Bristol, opposite to Ireland, into which its inhabitants make frequent voyages on account of trade. Wulfstan cured the people of this town of a most odious and inveterate custom, which they derived from their ancestors, of buying men and women in all parts of England, and exporting them to Ireland for the sake of gain. The young women they commonly got with child, and carried them to market in their pregnancy, that they might bring a better price. You might have seen, with sorrow, long ranks of young persons of both sexes, and of the greatest beauty, tied together with ropes, and daily exposed to sale: nor were these men ashamed, O horrid wickedness! to give up their nearest relations, nay, their own children, to slavery. Wulfstan, knowing the obstinacy of these people, sometimes stayed two months among them, preaching every Lord's day; by which, in process of time, he had made so great an impression upon their minds, that they abandoned that wicked trade, and set an example to all the rest of England to do the same." Henry's Hist. vol. iv. p. 238.

[53] Bede, iv. c. 13.

their number, we must inspect their enumeration in Domesday-book. No portion of land scarcely is there mentioned without some.

When we consider the condition of the servile, as it appears in the Saxon laws, we shall find it to have been very degraded indeed. They were allowed to be put into bonds, and to be whipped.[54] They might be branded[55]; and on one occasion they are spoken of as if actually yoked: "Let every man know his teams of men, of horses, and oxen."[56]

They were allowed to accumulate some property of their own. We infer this from the laws having subjected them to pecuniary punishments, and from their frequently purchasing their own freedom. If an esne did theow-work against his lord's command, on Sunday evening after sun-set and before the moon set, he was to pay eighty shillings to his lord.[57] If a theow gave offerings to idols, or eat flesh willingly on a fast-day, he was mulcted six shillings, or had to suffer in his hide.[58] If an esne killed another esne, who was in no act of offence, he forfeited all he was worth; but if he killed a freeman, his geld was to be one hundred shillings: he was to be given up by his owner, who was to add the price of another man."[59]

A father, if very poor, was allowed to give his son up to slavery for seven years, if the child consented to it.[60]

Freedmen.

If the mass of the Anglo-Saxon population had continued in this servile state, the progress of the nation in the improvements of society would have been very small. But a better destiny awaited them; the custom of manumission began; and the diffusion of Christianity, by mildly attempering the feelings of

[54] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 15. 22. 52, 53. 59.
[55] Ibid. p. 103. 139.
[56] Ibid. p. 47.
[57] Ibid. p. 11.
[58] Ibid. p. 11.
[59] Ibid. p. 8.
[60] 1 Wilk. Conc. 130.

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the individual, and by compelling him to cultivate acts of benevolence as a religious duty, increased the prevalence of the practice.

We have many instances of the emancipation of slaves. A landholder, in Edgar's time, who had thirty men on his grounds, directed that out of these thirteen should be liberated as lot should decide; so that, placed in the highway, they might go wherever they pleased.[61] It seems to have been an exercise of philanthropy, not uncommon in wills, to give freedom to some of this pitiable class of human kind. Wynfleda displays the compassionate feelings of her sex very strikingly, by directing the emancipation of several of her slaves:—

"Let Wulfware be freed, and follow whomsoever he likes best; and let Wulflæde be freed, on the condition that she follow Æthelfleda and Eadgifa (her daughters); and let Gerburg be freed, and Miscin, and the daughter of Burhulf at Cinnuc; and Ælfsige, and his wife, and his eldest daughter, and Ceolstane's wife; and at Ceorlatune let Pifus be freed, and Edwin, and ———'s wife; and at Saccuncumbe let Ædelm be freed, and man, and Johannan, and Spror and his wife, and Enefette, and Gersand, and Snel; and at Colleshylle let Æthelgythe be freed, and Bicca's wife, and Æffa, and Beda, and Gurhan's wife, and let Bryhsig's wife, the sister of Wulfar, be freed; and ——— the workman, and Wulfgythe the daughter of Ælfswythe,"[62]

We have many instruments of manumission extant, from which we learn some of the causes which produced it.

Sometimes individuals, from their benevolence, gave them their freedom. Thus Halwun Noce, of Exeter, freed Hagel, his family woman[63]; and so Lifgith and his two children were declared free.[64] Sometimes the charitable kindness of others redeemed them:—

"Here appeareth in this Christ's book, that Siwine the son of Leofwie, at Lincumb, hath bought Sydelflæda out with five shillings and * * * * * pennies, to perpetual freedom, of John the

[61] 3 Gale, Script. 407.
[62] Hickes, Præf. xxii.
[63] Hickes, Diss. Ep. 12.
[64] Sax. Dict. App.

bishop and all the family at Bath; and hereto witness is Godric Ladda, and Sæwold, and his two sons, Scirewold and Brihtwold."[65]

So Æilgyfu the Good redeemed Hig and Dunna, and their offspring, for thirteen mancson.[66] We will give another specimen of these benevolent actions:—

"Here it is stated in this writing, that Aluric, the canon of Exeter, redeemed Reinold and his children, and all their offspring, of Herberdi, for two shillings; and Aluric called them free and sac-less, in town and from town, for God's love; and the witness to this is," &c.[67]

Sometimes piety procured a manumission. Thus two Irishmen were freed for the sake of an abbot's soul.[68] But the most interesting kind of emancipation appears in those writings which announce to us that the slaves had purchased their own liberty, or that of their family. Thus Edric bought the perpetual freedom of Sægyfa, his daughter, and all her offspring. So, for one pound, Elfwig the Red purchased his own liberty; and Sæwi Hagg bought out his two sons.[69] Godwin the Pale is also notified to have liberated himself, his wife, and children, for fifteen shillings. Brightmær bought the perpetual freedom of himself, his wife Ælgyfu, their children and grandchildren, for two pounds. Leofenoth redeemed himself and his offspring for five oran and twelve sheep; and Ægilsig bought his son's liberty for sixty pennies.[70]

The Anglo-Saxon laws recognised the liberation of slaves, and placed them under legal protection. In one of them it is declared, that if any of them freed his slave at the altar, the theow should become folk-free, or free among the people; but his former owner was to possess his property, his weregeld, and his mund.[71] It was enjoined by the synod, held in 816, that at the death of a bishop, his English slaves, who

[65] Sax. Dict. App.
[66] Hickes, Diss. Ep. 12.
[67] Wanley, Catal. 152.
[68] Sax. Dict. App.
[69] See all these emancipations in the Appendix to the Saxon Dictionary.
[70] Hickes, Diss. Ep. 13. 9, 10.
[71] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 11.

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had been reduced to slavery in his lifetime, should be freed.[72]

The liberal feelings of our ancestors towards their enslaved domestics appear in the generous gifts which they made to them. The grants of land from masters to their servants are very common.

Our wise and benevolent Alfred directed one of his laws to lessen the number of the enslaved. He could not emancipate those who were then in servitude, nor their future families, without a violent convulsion of the rights of property which then subsisted; and the general resistance would have made the romantic attempt not only ineffectual, but pernicious, both to those he wished to benefit and to the society at large. But what he could do safely he performed. He procured it to be enacted, by the witena-gemot, that if any one should in future buy a Christian slave, the time of his servitude should be limited to six years; and that on the seventh he should be free without any payment, and depart with the wife and the clothes he had at first. But if the lord had given him the wife, both she and her children were to remain. If he chose to continue a slave, he might determine to do so.[73] This law struck a decisive blow at slavery in England; it checked their future multiplication; it discouraged their sale and purchase; it established a system of legal emancipation; and gave the masters a deep interest in the kind treatment of the slaves then belonging to them, in order to preserve the race. From the effect of this provision, the free population increased every year.

The servile class was more numerous in England than the free. This is the usual case in all countries where slavery prevails: indeed the laborious class always outnumbers the proprietary body.

[72] Spel. Conc. 330.

[73] Wilk. Leg. 29.

## CHAP. X.

### *Their Gilds, or Clubs.*



THE gilds, or social confederations, in which many of the Anglo-Saxons chose to arrange themselves, deserve our peculiar attention; we will describe them as they appear to us from some MSS. of their instruments of association which are yet in being. They are remarkable for the social and combining spirit which they display.

One of these is a gild-scipe, composed of eighteen members, at Exeter, whose names are mentioned in it, and to which the bishop and canons are stated to have acceded. It recites, that they have undertaken the association in mutual fraternity: the objects of their union appear to have been, that every hearth, or family, should, at Easter in every year, pay one penny; and on the death of every member of the gild one penny, whether man or woman, for the soul's scot. The canons were to have this soul's scot, and to perform the necessary rites.[1] This gild-scipe somewhat resembles one of our benefit societies, in which the members make small stated payments, and are buried at the expense of the fund so raised.

Another gild-scipe at Exeter purports to have been made for God's love, and their soul's need, and to have agreed that their meetings should be thrice a year; viz. at Michaelmas, at Mary's Mass, over Midwinter, and at the holy days after Easter. Every member was to bring a certain portion of malt, and every cniht was to add a less quantity and some honey. The mass-priest was to sing a mass for their

[1] Our illustrious Hickes has printed this gild-scipe agreement, with others, in his Dissert. Epist. p. 18.

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living friends, and another for their dead friends, and every brother two psalms. At the death of every member, six psalms were to be chanted; and every man at the ꝑuþ-ꝑoꝑe was to pay five pennies, and at a house-burning one penny. If any man neglected the appointed days, he was to be fined the first time in three masses, the second in five, and the third time no man was to share with him, unless sickness or the compulsion of the lord occasioned his absence. If any one neglected his payments at the appointed time, he was to pay double; and if any member misgreeted another, he was to forfeit thirty pence. It concludes thus:—"We pray for the love of God that every man hold this meeting rightly, so as we have rightly agreed it should be. May God assist us in this."[2]

There is an instrument made on the establishment of a gild of thegns at Cambridge. By this every member was to take an oath of true fidelity to each other, and the gild was always to assist him who had the most just claim. If any of the gild died, all the gild-scipe was to carry him wherever he desired; and if any neglected to attend on this occasion, he was fined a syster of honey; and the gild-scipe was to furnish half of the provisions at the interment, and every one was to pay two-pence for alms, and what was suitable was to be taken to St. Etheldrytha. If any of the gild should need the assistance of his companions, and it was mentioned to the gerefa nearest the gild, then if the gerefa neglected him, unless the gild itself was near, he was to pay one pound. If the lord neglected it, he was to forfeit the same sum, unless his superior claims compelled him to the inattention, or sickness prevented. If any killed one of a gild, eight pounds were to be the compensation; and if the homicide did not pay it, all the gildship were to avenge their member, and to support the con-

[2] Hickes, Dissert Epist. p. 21, 22.

sequences: if one did it, all were to bear alike. If any of the gild killed any other person, and was in distress, and had to pay for the wrong, and the slain were a twelf hinde person, every one of the gild must help with half a mark. If the slain be a ceorl, let each pay two ora, or one ora if a Welshman. If the gild-man kills any one wilfully or foolishly, he must bear himself what he should do; and if he should kill any of the gild by his own folly, he and his relations must abide the consequence, and pay eight pounds for the gild, or else lose its society and friendship. If any of the gild eat or drink with the homicide, unless before the king, or the lord bishop, or the ealdorman, he must pay a pound, unless, with two persons sitting, he can prove that he did not know it. If any of the gild misgreet another, let him pay a syster of honey, unless with two friends he can clear himself. If a cniht draw a weapon, let him pay his lord a pound, and let the lord have it where he may; and all the gild-scipe shall help him to get it. If the cniht wound another, let the lord avenge it. If the cniht sits within the path, let him pay a syster of honey; and if he has a foot-seat, let him do the same. If any of the gild die, or fall sick, out of the district, let the gild fetch him, and bring him as he wished, either dead or alive, under the penalty before mentioned. If he die at home, and the gild seek not the body, nor his morgen spæce, let a syster of honey be forfeited.[3]

These gilds are sometimes alluded to in the laws. If a man without paternal relations should fight and kill another, then his maternal kinsmen were ordered to pay one third of the were, his gild a third, and for the other part his gild was to escape.[4] In London there appear to have been free gilds: "This is the council that the bishops and gerefas that belong to

[3] Hickes, Dissert. Epist. p. 20.
[4] Wilkins, Leg. Sax. p. 41.; and see the laws, p. 18.

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London borough have pronounced, and with pledges confirmed in our free gilds."[5] In a charter concerning Canterbury, the three companies of the citizens within the walls, and those without, are mentioned.[6] Domesday-book likewise notices a gild of the clergy in the same city.[7] They seem, on the whole, to have been friendly associations made for mutual aid and contribution, to meet the pecuniary exigencies which were perpetually arising from burials, legal exactions, penal mulcts, and other payments or compensations. That much good fellowship was connected with them can be doubted by no one. The fines of their own imposition imply that the materials of conviviality were not forgotten. — These associations may be called the Anglo-Saxon clubs.

That in mercantile towns and sea-ports there were also gilds, or fraternities of men constituted for the purpose of carrying on more successful enterprises in commerce, even in the Anglo-Saxon times, appears to be a fact. Domesday-book mentions the gihalla, or guildhall, of the burghers of Dover.[8]

[5] Wilkins, Leg. Sax. p. 65.

[6] MS. Chart. penes the late Mr. Astle "ꝥa ꝥhreo ȝerefinaſ inne buruhpapa and utan buruhpapa." No. 28.

[7] "32 inauguras quas tenent clerici de villa in gildam suam." Domesday, f. 3.

[8] "In quibus erat gihalla burgensium." Domesday, f. 1. We find clubs, or peculiar societies of individuals, existing in the Roman empire in the time of Trajan; which met under the pretence of business, festivity, or friendship, but which were then suspected by the government to be seminaries of faction or disaffection. They were called Hetærias; from ἑταιρια, a company, or fraternity, derived from ἑταιρος, a companion. That Trajan endeavoured to suppress them we learn from Pliny's Epistle to him, "I will prohibit the Hetærias (Hetærias esse) according to your mandates." l. 10. Some of the sufferings of the first Christians may have arisen from their devotional meetings being confounded with these political clubs. Tertullian distinguishes them from these, by desiring in his Apology, about the year 200, that the Christian sect might be tolerated "inter licitas factiones" among the allowed associations, "because it is a sect from which nothing proceeds that is hostile, like the dreadful results of other illegal factions." He adds, "for such a multiplicity of sects is suppressed from reasons of state, that the city may not be split into parties: since these divisions would introduce a general disorder into all your popular elections, councils, courts, assemblies, and public spectacles, by the ambitious clashings of the contending factions. And never was there more reason than now to provide against such disorders, as the instigators are sure not to want violent hands for any design, if they want not money to pay them." Apol. c. 38. There seems to be a tendency of mankind in all civilised nations to form secret societies of the Hetæria kind in every age, though under varying appellations, and with popular exterior pretensions, suited to the feelings of the day.

## CHAP. XI.

*Their Trades, Mechanical Arts, and Foreign Commerce.*

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Two things become essential to the peace and comfort of all social unions of mankind; — one, that each should have the means of acquiring the property he needs for his subsistence and welfare; and the other that he should be accustomed to some employments or amusements, in which his activity and time may be consumed without detriment to others or weariness to himself.

In our age of the world, so many trades, arts, professions, and objects, and channels of occupation exist, that, in the ordinary course of life, every member of our population may obtain, without a crime, if he seek with moderate assiduity, the supplies that are necessary both to his wants and his pleasures. It was not so in the Anglo-Saxon times. The trades and arts were few, and foreign commerce was inconsiderable. Invention had not found out conveniences of life sufficient to employ many mechanics or manufacturers, or to give much diversity of employment. The land and its produce were in the hands of a few, and it was difficult for the rest to get any property by honourable or peaceful means. Our Alfred intimates this, for he says, "Now thou canst not obtain money unless thou steal it, or plunder it, or discover some hidden treasure; and thus when you acquire it to yourself you lessen it to others."[1] Violence and rapine were the usual means of acquiring property among that part of the

[1] Alf. Boet. p. 69.

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better classes who happened to be unprovided with it. Hence the exhortations of the clergy and the laws are so full of denunciations against these popular depredators. It is declared to be the duty of an earl to hate thieves and public robbers: to destroy plunderers and spoilers, unless they would amend and abstain from such unrighteous actions.[2] Tradesmen and merchants are often spoken of as poor and humble men. The great sources of property were from land and war, and from the liberality of the great. It was by slow degrees that trades multiplied, and the productions of the arts and manufactures increased so as to furnish subsistence and wealth to those who wished to be peaceable and domestic.

In the present state, and under the fortunate constitution of the British islands, our tradesmen and manufacturers are an order of men who contribute essentially to uphold our national rank and character, and form a class of actual personal distinction superior to what the same order has in any age or country possessed, except in the middle ages of Italy. They are not only the fountains of that commerce which rewards us with the wealth of the world, but they are perpetually supplying the other classes and professions of society with new means of improvement and comfort; and with those new accessions of persons and property which keep the great machine of our political greatness in constant strength and activity.

Some proportion of these advantages, gradually increasing, has been reaped by England, from the trading part of its community, in every stage of its commercial progression. But the farther we go back into antiquity, the pursuit was less reputable, and the benefits more rare. This class of society in the remote ages was neither numerous, opulent, nor

[2] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 149.

civilised. Our earlier ancestors had neither learnt the utility of dividing labour, nor acquired the faculty of varying its productions. They had neither invention, taste, enterprise, respectability, influence, or wealth. The tradesmen of the Anglo-Saxons were, for the most part, men in a servile state. The clergy, the rich, and the great, had domestic servants, who were qualified to supply them with those articles of trade and manufacture which were in common use. Hence, in monasteries we find smiths, carpenters, millers, illuminators, architects, agriculturists, fishermen. Thus a monk is described as well skilled in smith-craft.[3] Thus Wynfleda, in her will, mentions the servants she employed in weaving and sewing; and there are many grants of land remaining, in which men of landed property rewarded their servants who excelled in different trades. In one grant, the brother of Godwin gives to a monastery a manor, with its appendages; that is, his overseer and all his chattels, his smith, carpenter, fisherman, miller, all these servants, and all their goods and chattels.[4]

The habits of life were too uniform; its luxuries too few; its property too small; its wants too numerous; and the spirit of the great mass too servile and dull, to have that collection of ingenious, active, respected, and inventive men, who make and circulate our internal and external commerce, with eager, but not illiberal competition; or to have those accomplished artificers and manufacturers whose taste in execution equals that of the most elegant fancy in its inventions. Neither the workmen nor their customers, however elevated in society, had those faculties of taste and imagination which now accompany the fabrication of every luxury, and almost of every comfort with which mechanical labour surrounds us. Utility, glaring

[3] Bede, v. c. 14. and p. 634.

[4] 1 Dug. Mon. 306.

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gaudiness, and material value were the chief criterions of the general estimation. The delicacy and ingenuity of the workmanship were not yet allowed to be able to surpass the substantial worth. No commendation called them into existence; none sought to acquire them; none seemed to anticipate the possibility of their attainment. Hence all were satisfied with the coarse and clumsy, if it had that show which strikes an undiscriminating eye, that sterling value which announced the wealth of its possessor, and that serviceableness for which alone he required it. The Anglo-Saxon artificers and manufacturers were therefore for some time no more than what real necessity put in action. Their productions were few, inartificial, and unvaried. They lived and died poor, unhonoured, and unimproved. But, by degrees, the manumission of slaves increased the numbers of the independent part of the lower orders. Some of the emancipated became agricultural labourers, and took land of the clergy and the great, paying them an annual gafol, or rent; but many went to the burgs and towns, and as the king was the lord of the free, they resided in these under his protection, and became free burghers or burgesses. In these burgs and towns they appear to have occupied houses, paying him rent, or other occasional compensations, and sometimes performing services for him. Thus, in Canterbury, Edward had fifty-one burghers, paying him gafol, or rent, and over two hundred and twelve others he had the legal jurisdiction.[5] In Bath, the king had sixty-four burghers, who yielded four pounds.[6] In Exeter, the king had two hundred and eighty-five houses, paying eighteen pounds a year.[7] In some other places we find such compensations as these mentioned: "Twelve sheep and lambs, and one bloom of iron, from every

[5] Domesday-book, fo. 2.
[6] Ibid. p. 87.
[7] Ibid. p. 100.

free man."[8] These individuals and all such were so many men released from the tyranny of the great. For toll, gafol, and all customs, Oxford paid the king twenty pounds a year, and six sextaria of honey.[9] At Dover, when the king's messenger arrived, the burghers had to pay three-pence for transporting his horse in winter, and two-pence in summer. They also provided a steersman and helper.[10]

In the burgs, some of the inhabitants were still under other lords. Thus in Romenel twenty-five burghers belonged to the archbishop. In Bath, after the king's burghers are mentioned, it is said that ninety burghers of other men yielded sixty shillings. In the same place, the church of Saint Peter had thirty-four burghers, who paid twenty shillings.[11] At Romenel, besides those who were under the archbishop, one Robert is stated to have had fifty burghers, of whom the king had every service; but they were freed, on account of their service at sea, from every custom, except robbery, breach of the peace, and forestel.[12]

In these places, the services and charges were sometimes most rigorously exacted. It is stated of Hereford, that if any one wished to retire from the city, he might, with leave of the gerefa, sell his house, if he found a purchaser who was willing to perform in his stead the accustomed services; and in this event the gerefa had the third penny of the sale. But if any one, from his poverty, could not do the regular service, he was compelled to abandon his house to the gerefa without any consideration. The gerefa had then to take care that the house did not remain empty, that the king might not lose his dues.[13]

In some burgs, the members had been so wealthy

[8] Domesday-book, fo. 87. 92. 94.
[9] Ibid. Com. Oxf.
[10] Ibid. fo. 1.
[11] Ibid. fo. 10.
[12] Ibid. fo. 87.
[13] These customs are excerpted by Gale out of Domesday-book. Hist. iii. p. 768.

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as to have acquired themselves a property in the burg. Thus, at Canterbury, the burghers had forty-five mansuras without the city, of which they took the gafol and the custom, while the king retained the legal jurisdiction. They also held of the king thirty-three acres of land in their gild.[14]

But this state of subjection to gafols, customs, and services, under which the people of the burgs and towns continued, had this great advantage over the condition of the servile, that the exacted burdens were definite and certain, and though sometimes expensive were never oppressive. Such a state was indeed an independence, compared with the degradation of a theow; and we probably see in these burghers the condition of the free part of the community, who were not actually freeholders of land, or who, though freed, had not wholly left the domestic service of their masters.

By slow degrees the increasing numbers of society, or their augmented activity, produced a surplus property beyond the daily consumption, which acquired a permanent state in the country in some form or other, and then constituted its wealth. Every house began to have some article of lasting furniture or convenience which it had not before; as well as every tradesman goods laid in store, and every farmer corn, or cattle, or implements of tillage more numerous than he once possessed. When this stage of surplus produce occurs, property begins to multiply; the bonds of stern necessity relax; civilisation emerges; leisure increases, and a great number share it. Other employments than those of subsistence are sought for. Amusement begins to be a study, and a class of society to provide it becomes desired. The grosser gratifications then verge towards the refinements of future

[14] Domesday-book, fo. 2.

luxury. The mind awakens from the lethargy of sense, and a new spirit, and new objects of industry, invention, and pursuit, gradually arise in the advancing population. All these successions of improvement become slowly visible to the antiquarian observer as he approaches the latter periods of the Anglo-Saxon dynasty. But they were not the accompaniments of its first state; or, if they at all existed, they were confined to the court, the castle, and the monastery; and were not indeed to be found among the inferior thegns or the poorer cloisters. Some of these had so little property that they could not afford to allow meat, and others not wheaten bread, as an article of their food. In such miserable abodes the comforts of surplus property could not be obtained; and where these are not general, the nation is poor. This epithet was long applicable to the Anglo-Saxon octarchy.

Both war and agriculture want the smith. Hence one of the most important trades of the Anglo-Saxons was the smith, who is very frequently mentioned. Aldhelm takes the trouble to describe the "convenience of the anvil, the rigid hardness of the beating hammer, and the tenacity of the glowing tongs;" and to remark, that "the gem-bearing belts, and diadems of kings, and various instruments of glory, were made from the tools of iron."[15] The smiths who worked in iron were called isernsmithas. They had also the goldsmith, the seolfersmith (silversmith), and the arsmith or coppersmith. In the dialogues before quoted, the smith says, "Whence the share to the ploughman, or the goad, but from my art? whence to the fisherman an angle, or to the shoe-wyrhta an awl, or to the sempstress a needle, but from my art?" The other replies, "Those in thy smithery only give us iron fire-sparks, the noise of beating hammers, and blowing

[15] Aldhelm de Laud. Virg. 298.

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bellows."[16] Smiths are frequently mentioned in Domesday. In the city of Hereford there were six smiths, who paid each one penny for his forge, and who made one hundred and twenty pieces of iron from the king's ore. To each of them, three-pence was paid as a custom, and they were freed from all other services.[17] In a district of Somerset, it is twice stated, that a mill yielded two plumbas of iron.[18] Gloucester paid to the king thirty-six dicras of iron, and one hundred ductile rods, to make nails for the king's ships.[19]

The treow-wyrhta, literally tree or wood workman, or, in modern phrase, the carpenter, was an occupation as important as the smith's. In the dialogues above mentioned, he says he makes houses and various vessels and ships.

The shoemaker and salter appear also in the dialogues: the sceowyrhta, or shoemaker, seems to have been a comprehensive trade, and to have united some that are now very distinct businesses. He says, "My craft is very useful and necessary to you. I buy hides and skins, and prepare them by my art, and make of them shoes of various kinds; and none of you can winter without my craft." He subjoins a list of the articles which he fabricates: viz.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ankle leathers, | Bridle thongs, | Leather neck-pieces, |
| Shoes, | Trappings, | Halters, |
| Leather hose, | Flasks, | Wallets, |
| Bottles, | Boiling vessels, | Pouches. |

The salter, baker, cook, and fisherman, have been described before.

Besides the persons who made those trades their business, some of the clergy, as we advance to the age preceding the Norman conquest, appear to us as labouring to excel in the mechanical arts. Thus

[16] MS. Tib. A. 3.
[17] Domesday-book, in loc.
[18] Ibid. fo. 94.
[19] Ibid.

Dunstan, besides being competent to draw and paint the patterns for a lady's robe, was also a smith, and worked on all the metals. Among other labours of his industry, he made two great bells for the church at Abingdon. His friend Ethelwold, the bishop, made two other bells for the same place, of a smaller size; and a wheel full of small bells, much gilt, to be turned round for its music, on feast-days. He also displayed much art in the fabrication of a large silver-table of curious workmanship.[20] Stigand, the bishop of Winchester, made two images and a crucifix, and gilt and placed them in the cathedral of his diocese.[21] One of our kings made a monk, who was a skilful goldsmith, an abbot.[22] It was even exacted by law that the clergy should pursue these occupations; for Edgar says, "We command that every priest, to increase knowlege, diligently learn some handicraft."[23] It was at this period that it began to be felt that skill could add value to the material on which it operated; and as the increasing wealth of society enabled some to pay for its additional cost, a taste for ornament as well as massy value now emerged.

The art of glass-making was unknown in England in the seventh century, when Benedict, the abbot of Weremouth, procured men from France, who not only glazed the windows of his church and monastery, but taught the Anglo-Saxons the art of making glass for windows, lamps, drinking-vessels, and for other uses.[24]

[20] Dugd. Mon. 104.

[21] Anglia Sacra, i. p. 293.

[22] MS. Claud. C. 9.

[23] Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. 83.

[24] Bede, Hist. Abb. Wer. 225. Glass windows have been found in the Roman baths at Pompeii, made of "good plate glass." Sir William Gell remarks that, "the vast collection of bottles, glasses, and other utensils discovered at Pompeii, is sufficient to show that the ancients were well acquainted with the art of glass-blowing in all its branches. In process of time, glass became so much the fashion that whole chambers were lined with it. The remains of such a room were discovered in the year 1826 near Ficulnea in the Roman territory. In the time of Seneca, the chambers in Thermæ had walls covered with glass and Thasian marble. Glass seems to have been at first brought from Egypt, and to have received its name of ναλος from the Coptic. Aristophanes mentions a burning-glass in the Nubes of Aristophanes, v. 764." Gell's Pompeiana, new series, vol. i. chap. 6.

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Our progress in the art was slow; for we find the disciple of Bede thus addressing a bishop of France on this subject in the next century: "If there be any man in your district who can make glass-vessels well, when time permits, condescend to send him to me; or if there is any one out of your diocess, in the power of others, I beg your fraternity will persuade him to come to us, for we are ignorant and helpless in this art: and if it should happen that any of the glass-makers should, by your diligence and with the divine pleasure, be suffered to come to us, be assured that if I am alive I will receive him with kind courtesy."[25]

The fortunate connection which Christianity established between the clergy of Europe favoured the advancement of all the mechanical arts. We read perpetually of presents of the productions of human labour and skill passing from the more civilised countries to those more rude. We read of a church having a patine made with Greek workmanship[26]; and also of a bishop in England who was a Greek by birth.[27]

They had the arts of weaving, embroidering, and dyeing. Aldhelm intimates these: "We do not negligently despise the woollen stamina of threads, worked by the woof and the shuttles, even though the purple robe and silken pomp of emperors shine." Again, "The shuttles, not filled with purple only but with various colours, are moved here and there among the thick spreading of the threads, and by the embroidering art they adorn all the woven work with various groupes of images."[28] Edward the Elder had his daughters taught to exercise their needle and their distaff.[29] Indeed, the Anglo-Saxon ladies

[25] 16 Mag. Bib. Pat. 88.
[26] Dugd. Mon. p. 40.
[27] 3 Gale, x. Script. 464.
[28] Aldhelm de Laud. Virg. 298. 305. He also mentions the fucorum muneribus. Ibid.
[29] Malmsb. lib. ii. c. 5. p. 47.

were so much accustomed to spinning, that just as we in legal phrase, and by a reference to former habits now obselete, term unmarried ladies spinsters, so Alfred in his will, with true application, called the female part of his family the spindle side. The Norman historian remarks of our ancient countrywomen, that they excelled with the needle, and in gold embroidery.[30] Aldhelm's robe is described to have been made of a most delicate thread of a purple ground, and that within black circles the figures of peacocks were worked among them of ample size.[31]

Bede alludes to their jewellers and goldsmiths: "A rich and skilful gold-worker, wishing to do some admirable work, collects, wherever he can, remarkable and precious stones to be placed among the gold and silver, as well to show his skill, as for the beauty of his work. Those precious stones are chiefly of a ruddy or aërial colour."[32] From the custom of the kings making presents of rich garments, vases, bracelets, and rings to their witena-gemot and courtiers, and of great lords doing the same to their knights, the trades for making these must have had much employment. The gemots often met three times a year. The lords frequently held their imitative courts.

One of their trades seems to have been the tavern, or the public house: for a priest is forbidden to drink "at the wine tuns."[33] An ale-house and ale-shop are also mentioned in the laws.[34]

The external commerce of these ancient times was confined, because their imperfect civilisation, and the poverty of the great body of their population, prevented an extensive demand for foreign commodities.

[30] Gesta Norman. ap. Du Chesne, 211.
[31] 3 Gale, x. Script. 351.
[32] Bede's Op. viii. p. 1068.
[33] Wilk. Leg. 157.
[34] A penalty was inflicted if a man was killed in an eala-huse, ibid. p. 117. A priest was forbidden to be in an eala-scop, ibid. p. 100. This is the earliest mention that I have found of a shop.

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But the habit of visiting distant parts for the purposes of traffic had already begun. Ohther's voyage proves, that men went to the North, both for the purposes of traffic and of discovery: he says, they pursued whales for their teeth, and made ropes of their hides.[35] We read of merchants from Ireland landing at Cambridge with cloths, and exposing their merchandise to sale.[36] London, even in the seventh century, is mentioned as a port which ships frequented[37]; and we find merchants' ships sailing to Rome.[38] The trading vessels sometimes joined together, and went out armed for their mutual protection[39]; but we may suppose, that while piracy lasted navigation was unfrequent.

In the Saxon dialogues, the merchant (mancgere) is introduced: "I say that I am useful to the king, and to ealdormen, and to the rich, and to all people. I ascend my ship with my merchandise, and sail over the sea-like places, and sell my things, and buy dear things which are not produced in this land, and I bring them to you here with great danger over the sea; and sometimes I suffer shipwreck, with the loss of all my things, scarcely escaping myself."—"What do you bring to us?" "Skins, silks, costly gems, and gold; various garments, pigment, wine, oil, ivory, and orichalcus, copper, and tin, silver, glass, and such like." —"Will you sell your things here as you bought them there?" "I will not, because what would my labour benefit me? I will sell them here dearer than I bought them there, that I may get some profit, to feed me, my wife, and children."[40]

That public markets were established in various parts of England in this period, we learn from many documents. It is clear from Domesday-book that

[35] See Alfred's account of this voyage in the second volume of this work.
[36] 3 Gale, 482.
[37] Dugd. Mon. 76.
[38] Bede, 294.
[39] Hist. Wilkin.
[40] MS. Tib. A. 3.

these markets paid a toll. In Bedfordshire, a toll de mercato is mentioned, which yielded seven pounds. The market at Taunton paid fifty shillings.[41] A market was established at Peterborough, with the privilege that no other was to be allowed within certain limits in its vicinity.[42]

We shall state concisely a few customs as to our commercial navigation. At Chester, if ships should come there, or depart from it, without the king's leave, the king and Comes were to have forty shillings for every man in the ship. If they came in violation of the king's peace, or against his prohibition, the ships, mariners, and their property, were forfeited to the king and Comes. With the royal permission they might sell quietly what they had brought, but they were to pay to the king and his Comes four-pence for every last. If the king's governor should order those having the skins of martens not to sell them before he had seen them, none were to disobey him, under a penalty of forty shillings. This port yielded forty-five pounds, and three timbres of marten-skins. In the same place false measure incurred a fine of four shillings; and for bad ale the offender paid as such, or else was placed on a dung-hill.[43]

At Southwark, no one took any toll on the strand, or the water, but the king. At Arundel, a particular person is named who took the custom paid by foreigners.[44] At Canterbury, a prepositus is stated to have taken the custom from foreign merchants, in certain lands there, which another ought to have received. At Lewes, it is mentioned, that whoever either bought or sold, gave the governor a piece of money.[45]

Particular laws were made by the Anglo-Saxon government to regulate the manner of buying and

[41] Domesday, in loc.
[42] Ingulf, 46.
[43] Domesday, in loc.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.

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selling. These laws had two objects in view; to prevent or detect theft; and to secure the due payment of the tax or toll which became due on such occasions.[46]

When the produce of the labour and fertility of a country begins to exceed its consumption, and no calamity obstructs its natural progress, the amount of its surplus accumulations increases in every generation, till the whole community becomes furnished with permanent goods, and some individuals with peculiar abundance. The Anglo-Saxons had reached this state in the reign of Ethelred. A considerable quantity of bullion, coined and uncoined, had then become diffused in the nation, and they were enabled to pay those heavy taxations which were so often imposed, with such impolitic weakness, to buy off the Danish invasions. These unwise payments vexed but did not exhaust the nation. It became wealthy again under the peaceful reign of the Confessor. Both the taste for luxuries, and the spirit of increased production, were then pervading the country, and the national affluence was visibly increasing when the Norman armament landed on its coasts.

In the ninth and tenth centuries, the Northmen were very enterprising in their navigation. They discovered Iceland and Greenland, and a more distant country, which they called Vinland, and which has been considered, not unjustly, to have been some part of the North American continent.[47]

A remark may be added on their travelling and hospitality. It would seem that they travelled armed.

[46] Several facts concerning the commerce of our ancestors have been occasionally mentioned in the preceding volume; as the intercourse between Offa and Charlemagne; Alfred's embassy to India; Æthelstan's connections with Europe; and Canute's letter, explaining the business which he had transacted with the Pope.

[47] One of the voyages may be seen in Snorre, tom. i. p. 303. 308. Torfæus has discussed this subject in a book on Winland. Mallet has given an interesting chapter on the maritime discoveries of the Northmen, in his Northern Antiquities, vol. i. c. 11. p. 268. of the translation edited by Dr. Percy.

We read of one journeying with his horse and his spear; when he alighted, he gave his spear to his attendants.[48]

Their hospitality was kind: on the arrival of a stranger he was welcomed; they brought him water to wash his hands: they washed his feet, and for this purpose warm water was used; they wiped them with a cloth, and the host in one case cherished them in his bosom. We also read of warm wine administered to the new guest.[49]

Hospitality was, however, dangerous in some degree from its responsibility: if any one entertained a guest (cuman, literally a come-one,) three nights in his own house, whether a trader, or any other person that had come over the boundary, and fed him with victuals, and the guest did any thing wrong, the host was to bring him to justice, or to answer for it.[50] By another law, a guest, after two nights' residence, was reckoned part of the family, and the owner of it was to be answerable for his actions.[51]

If a shorn man travelled steorless, or vagrantly, hospitality might be given to him once, but he was to have leave of absence before he could be longer maintained.[52]

Travelling was attended with some penal regulations: if a stranger in any part went out of the road, or through woods, it was a law that he should either shout aloud, or blow with a horn, on pain of being deemed a thief, and suffering as such.[53]

It was the habit of depredation that made every traveller an object of legal suspicion at this period. From the peril of the roads, want of communication, the poverty of the middling and lower classes, and the distance, violence, and rapacity of the barons and

[48] Bede, p. 233.
[49] Ibid. p. 234. 251. 257.
[50] Wilkins, Leg. Sax. p. 9.
[51] Ibid. p. 18.
[52] Ibid. p. 4.
[53] Ibid. p. 12.

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knights, travelling for the purposes of traffic was very rare, and became more so when the Northman invaders were in the island, and while their unsettled emigrants were continually moving over it. Hence few men left their towns or burghs but for pillage or revenge; and this occasioned that jealous mistrust of the law which operated so long to discourage even mercantile journies.

## CHAP. XII.

### *Their Chivalry.*



THERE is no evidence that the refined and enthusiastic spirit of gallantry which accompanied chivalry in its perfect stage, prevailed among the Anglo-Saxons; but that chivalry, in a less polished form, and considered as a military investiture, conferred with religious ceremonies, by putting on the belt and sword, and giving the knight a peculiar dignity among his countrymen;—that this kind of chivalry existed in England before the Norman conquest, the authorities adduced in this chapter will sufficiently ascertain.

In the reign of Edward the Confessor, Hereward, a noble Anglo-Saxon youth, distinguished himself by his daring valour and eccentricity. As his character is highly romantic, and affords a remarkable instance of the Anglo-Saxon chivalry, I will state the main incidents of his life, from the plain and temperate narration of his contemporary, who was the Conqueror's secretary.

"His father was Leofric, lord of Brunne, in Lincolnshire, a nobleman who had become very illustrious for his warlike exploits. He was a relation of the great earl of Hereford, who had married the king's sister.

"Hereward was the son of this Leofric and his wife Ediva. He was tall and handsome, but too warlike, and of an immoderate fierceness of mind. In his juvenile plays and wrestlings he was so ungovernable, that his hand was often raised against every one, and every one's hand against him. When the youths of his age went to wrestling and such other sports, unless he triumphed over all, and his playfellows conceded to him the laurel of victory, he very often extorted by his sword what he could not gain by his muscular strength.

"The youths of his neighbourhood complaining of this conduct,

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his father's anger was excited against him. Leofric stated to king Edward the many intolerable tricks that had been practised even upon himself, and his excessive violence towards others. Upon this representation, the Confessor ordered him into banishment.

"Hereward, thus exiled, went fearlessly to Northumbria, thence to Cornwall, thence to Ireland, and afterwards to Flanders; and everywhere most bravely carrying himself, he soon obtained a glorious and magnificent reputation.

"In every danger intrepidly pressing forward, and happily escaping; in every military conflict always throwing himself on the bravest, and boldly conquering; it was doubtful whether he was more fortunate or brave. His victories over all his enemies were complete, and he escaped harmless from the greatest battles.

"Becoming so illustrious by his military successes, his valiant deeds became known in England, and were sung through the country. The dislike of his parent, relatives, and friends, was changed into the most ardent affection.

"In Flanders he married a noble lady, Turfrida, and had by her a daughter, who lately married (I am transcribing Ingulf) an illustrious knight, a great friend to our monastery, and lord of Depyng and the paternal inheritance of Brunne and its appurtenances.

"The mother of Turfrida coming to England with her husband, with his permission forsook all earthly pomp, and became a nun in our monastery of Croyland.

"Hereward returning to his native soil with his wife, after great battles, and a thousand dangers frequently dared and bravely terminated, as well against the king of England as the earls barons, prefects, and presidents, which are yet sung in our streets (says Ingulf), and having avenged his mother with his powerful right hand, at length, with the king's pardon, obtained his paternal inheritance, and ended his days in peace, and was very lately buried near his wife in our monastery."[1]

It is obvious from the connection of this singular character with Croyland monastery, that no one could furnish us with more authentic particulars of him than Ingulf, who lived at the time, and was a monk in the same place. I will add a few more circumstances, which the same writer has recorded concerning him.

It was in Flanders that Hereward heard that the Normans had conquered England; that his father was dead; that the Conqueror had given his inheritance to a Norman; and that his mother's widowhood was

[1] Ingulf, p. 67, 68.

afflicted by many injuries and distresses. Transported with grief at the account, he hastened with his wife to England, and, collecting a body of her relations, he attacked the oppressors of his mother, and drove them from her territory.

At this period of the narration, the important passage[2] occurs, which gives such complete evidence to the Anglo-Saxon chivalry.

"Considering then, that he was at the head of very brave men, and commanded some *milites*, and had not yet been legally bound with the belt, according to the military custom, he took with him a very few tyros of his cohort, to be legitimately consociated with himself to warfare, and went to his uncle, the abbot of Peterborough, named Brand, a very religious man, (as I have heard from my predecessor, my lord Ulketul, abbot, and many others,) much given to charity, and adorned with all the virtues; and having first of all made a confession of his sins, and received absolution, he very urgently prayed that he might be made a legitimate *miles*. For it was the custom of the English, that every one that was to be consecrated to the legitimate *militia*, should, on the evening preceding the day of his consecration, with contrition and compunction, make a confession of all his sins to a bishop, an abbot, a monk, or some priest; and, devoted wholly to prayers, devotions, and mortifications, should pass the night in the church; in the next morning should hear mass, should offer his sword on the altar, and after the Gospel had been read, the priest having blessed the sword, should place it on the neck of the miles, with his benediction. Having communicated at the same mass with the sacred mysteries, he would afterwards remain a legitimate miles."

He adds, that the Normans regarded this custom of consecrating a miles as abomination, and did not hold such a one a legitimate miles, but reckoned him a slothful equitem and degenerate quiritem.

From the preceding account we collect these things:—

1st, That a man might take up arms, head warriors, fight with them, and gain much military celebrity, and yet not thereby become a legitimate miles.

2d, That he could not reputably head milites, without being a legitimate miles.

[2] Ingulf, p. 70.

3d, That to be a legitimate miles was an honorary distinction, worthy the ambition of a man who had previously been of such great military celebrity as Hereward.

4th, That to be a miles, an express ceremony of consecration was requisite.

5th, That the ceremony consisted of a confession and absolution of sins, on the day preceding the consecration; of watching in the church, all the previous night, with prayers and humiliations; of hearing mass next morning; of offering his sword on the altar; of its being blessed by the priest; of its being then placed on his neck; and of his afterwards communicating. He was then declared a legitimate miles.

6th, The mode above described was the Anglo-Saxon mode; but there was another mode in existence after the Conquest: for it is expressly mentioned, that the Normans did not use, but detested, the custom of religious consecration.

7th, That a legitimate miles was invested with a belt and a sword.

Another passage, which alludes to the Anglo-Saxon chivalry, is in Malmsbury, in which he expressly declares, that Alfred made Athelstan a miles. He says, that Alfred, seeing Athelstan to be an elegant youth, prematurely made him a miles, investing him with a purple garment, a belt set with gems, and a Saxon sword, with a golden sheath.[3]

The investiture of the belt, alluded to in the account of Hereward, and in Malmsbury's account of Athelstan's knighthood, is also mentioned by Ingulf, on another occasion. Speaking of the famous Saxon chancellor Turketul, who died in 975, he says, that he had, among other relics, the thumb of St. Bartholomew, with which he used to cross himself in danger, tempest, and lightning. A dux Beneventanus gave

[3] Malmsbury, p. 49

this to the emperor, when he girded him with the first military belt.[4] The emperor gave it to the chancellor. Another author who died in 1004 says, "Whoever uses the belt of his knighthood (militiæ) is considered as a knight (miles) of his dignity."[5]

That there was a military dignity among the Saxons, which they who wrote in Latin expressed by the term miles, is, I think, very clear, from other numerous passages. There are many grants of kings and others extant to their militibus. Thus Edred, "cuidam meo ministro ac militi," "meo fideli ministro ac militi," "cuidam meo militi."[6] The word miles cannot here mean simply a soldier. So to many charters we find the signatures of several persons characterised by this title.[7] Bede frequently uses the term in passages and with connections which show that he meant to express dignity by it. We are at least certain that his royal Anglo-Saxon translator believed this, because he has always interpreted the expression, when it has this signification, by a Saxon word of peculiar dignity.[8] Ingulf mentions several great men, in the Anglo-Saxon times, with the addition of miles as an

[4] Ingulf, p. 51.

[5] Abb. Flor. in Can. c. 51. Quisquis militiæ suæ cingulo utitor, dignitatis suæ miles adscribitur.

[6] MS. Claud. B. 6. So an archbishop gives land, Heming. Chart. 191. 210. 234.

[7] To a charta of Edward Confessor, five sign with the addition of miles. MS. Claud. B. 6. Eleven sign with miles to a charta of Ethelwulph. Text. Roff. In the Saxon chartulary of Wilton, which Sir Richard Colt Hoare is now printing, the charters are usually signed by several milites. In this, one of Edred's after four duces has twelve names with the addition of miles to each, p. 21. Another in 946, after the prelates and duces, has also twelve milites, p. 22. The next by Ethelred, in 994, after the prelates, abbots, and duces, has no milites, but instead of them, twenty ministri, p. 24. This curious variation intimates that miles and minister were synonymous. The Saxon term for minister was thegn, and this is the word by which Alfred translates the miles of Bede.

[8]

| *Bede:* | *Alfred:* |
|---|---|
| alium de militibus, | oþenne cyninges þegn, |
| cum his — militibus, | miþ his þegnum, |
| milite sibi fidelissimo, | his þegne — getreoweste, |
| prefato milite, | foreþpecenan his þegne, |
| comitibus ac militibus, | his geferum, cyninges þegnum, |
| de militia ejus juvenis, | fum geong þior cyninges þegn. |

P. 511. 525. 539. 551. 590.

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augmentation of their consequence; and once introduces a king styling a miles his magister.[9] — Domesday-book mentions several milites as holding lands.

But although the Anglo-Saxons had a military dignity which their Latin writers called miles, I do not think that the word cniht was applied by them to express it; at least, not till the latter periods of their dynasty.

It has been shown, in the chapter on their infancy and education, that a youth was called a cniht. By the same term they also denoted an attendant.[10] In Cedmon it occurs a few times; but it seems to have been used to mean youths. Speaking of Nabochodonossor, he says,

> He commanded his gerefas,
> out of the miserable relics of the Israelites,
> to seek some of the youth
> that were most skilled
> in the instruction of books.
> He would, that the cnihtas
> should learn the craft
> to interpret dreams.[11]
>
> Then they there found
> for their sagacious lord
> noble cnihtas.[12]

Speaking of the adoration of the image of Dara, he says,

> The cnihtas of a good race
> acted with discretion,
> that they the idol
> would not as their god
> hold and have.[13]
>
> Then was wrath
> the king in his mind.
> He commanded an oven to heat
> to the destruction of the lives of the cnihtas.[14]

[9] Ingulf, p. 6. 14. 20. 25. 63. This use of the word miles is one of Hickes's reasons for his attack on Ingulf; an attack which is clearly ill founded. I feel every gratitude to Hickes for his labours on the Northern languages; but I cannot conceal that I think him mistaken on several very important points of the Saxon antiquities.

[10] Gen. xxi. 65. Luke, vii. 7. and xii. 45.

[11] Cedmon, p. 77.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid. p. 79.

[14] Ibid. p. 80.

The word has no military or dignifying distinction in these passages.

Ælfric, in his glossary, interprets cniht-had by pueritia, pubes; and to oth cniht-hade he puts pube tenus.

There are, however, instances of grants to cnihtas, which imply, that after Alfred's reign, and those of his immediate descendants, the word was gradually advancing, from the expression of a youth or an attendant, to signify a more dignified sort of dependent. A Saxon will has, "Let men give my cnihtas and my stewardas witas forty punda." Ælfhelm, in his will, says, "I give to my wife and my daughter half the land at Cunnington, to be divided, except the four hides that I give to Æthelric and Alfwold, and the half hide that I give to Osmær, my cniht." Æthelstan Ætheling, in his will, expresses, "I give my father, king Æthelræd, the land at Cealhtun, except the eight hides that I have given to Ælmor, my cniht."—"And I give to Æthelwin, my cniht, the sword that he before gave me." [15] There are three grants of land from Oswald, archbishop, to cnihts; and it is important to observe, he does not call them his cnihts, or any other person's cnihts, but he calls them sumum cnihte, some cniht, or a cniht, as if cniht had been a definite and well-known character. His words are, "One hide at Hymeltun to sumum cniht, whose name is Wulfgeat;"—"two hides, all but sixty acres, to sumum cniht, whose name is Æthelwold;"—"———

[15] See these wills in the appendix to the Saxon dictionary. I perceive from Otfrid's Franco-theotise Paraphrase of the Gospels, that the word knight, or knechto, was used by the Franks, in the ninth century, to express the meaning of miles; for he says,

Ein thero knechto thir girah. "Unus militum hoc videt." Lib. iv. 53, 54. See also another citation in Schilter's Glossary, p. 518. As Otfrid's work is dated 870, his knechto is the most ancient use of the term knight for soldier that I have seen. It seems to mean, in his phrase, rather a dignified soldier, than a common one.

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hides to sumum cniht, whose name is Osulf, for God's love, and for our peace." [16]

In the admonitions to different orders of men, printed with the Anglo-Saxon laws, there is a passage which gives cniht and cnihthood in a meaning rather different from those which have been stated: "That will be a rightlike life, that a cniht continues in his cnihthade till he marries rightly a maiden wife, and have her then afterwards, and no other while she lives." [17] Cnihthade here implies chastity and bachelorship.

Perhaps cniht originally signified a boy, afterwards a servant who was not a slave. It may have been then applied to denote a military attendant; and in this sense it gradually superseded the word thegn, which I think was the Saxon term for the dignity implied by the term miles. A knight, even in the full chivalric meaning, was a military servant of somebody, either of the king, the queen, a favourite lady, or some person of dignity. In a state very similar to this are the cnihtas in the Saxon wills. They appear to us, in like manner, in a rank far above a servant in the Saxon gild-scipes. Of these fraternities, cnihts constituted a part, and are distinctly mentioned, though with a reference to some lord to whom they were subordinate; a situation which seems best explained, by supposing them free and respectable military dependents. "If a cniht draw a sword, the lord shall pay one pound, and let the lord get it when he may; and all the gild-scipe shall help him, that he may get his money. And if a cniht wounds another, his lord shall avenge it. And if a cniht sits within the ascent, let him pay one syster of honey; and if he has any foot-stool, let him

[16] Heming. Chart. Five hides are mentioned as the fee of a knight in this ancient author's collections, p. 189.

[17] Wilkins, Leg. Sax. p. 150.

pay the same." [18] In another gild-scipe, after each of the gild has been directed to bring two systers of malt, it is added, "And let every cniht bring one, and a sceat of honey." [19]

It occurs again, as a known and recognised character, in an act of a slave's emancipation, "Thereto is witness, William of Orchut, and Ruold the cniht, and Osbern fadera, and Umfreig of Tettaborn, and Alword the portreeve, and Johan the cniht." [20]

It occurs again, as the designation of a known and reputable character in society, in a Saxon charta about land; for after many witnesses have been mentioned by name, these words follow: "And many a good cniht besides these." [21]

The term as well as the character of cniht was, therefore, in the Anglo-Saxon period, rising fast to its full station of dignity.

There is a character represented in the illuminations and drawings of a Saxon MS. which I think answers to the situation of a cniht, in its more advanced meaning. When a king is sitting on his throne, he is drawn as holding his sceptre. Close by him, and as a part of his public dignity, a person is standing, holding his sword and shield. This figure occurs several times in the drawings of Genesis, in Claud. B. 4. A similar character occurs near a king in the battle. The king is fighting; an armed attendant, apparently a young man, is fighting near him. I consider these to represent what was originally called a king's thegn, or miles, and afterwards a cniht; and such a character Lilla appears to have been, who received the assassin's blow that was intended for Edwin.[22]

Tournaments appear to have been used in the age

[18] See the Gild-scipe in Hickes's Diss. Ep. p. 21.
[19] Ibid. p. 22.
[20] Ibid. p. 18.
[21] Hickes, Gram. Pref. p. xxi.
[22] See the 1st vol. of this work.

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of the Anglo-Saxons, for they are expressly mentioned in the laws of the emperor of Germany, Henry the First. It was in 934 that he published institutions concerning them.[23] By these he directs, that the equestrian games, to be fought by the usual weapons, should be solemnly exhibited in the empire by those of noble descent. All blasphemers and traitors; they who had deprived widows or virgins of their honour or property; the perjured, the coward, the homicide, and the sacrilegious; they who had robbed the orphan, who had attacked the unsuspecting, who had harassed society, and injured the commercial; the adulterer and the merchant; were prohibited from partaking of the diversions. If they presumed to present themselves, their horses were taken away, and they were to be thrown on the septum.[24]

The city or place appropriated for the exercises was made free to all except heretics, thieves, and traitors, during the time of the games, and for fourteen days preceding and afterwards. The area of the games was to be hedged round: every combatant was to be first confessed and absolved; every count was to bring with him but six companions; a baron four, a knight three, others only two, unless they maintained them at their own expense.[25]

Something like a trophy appears in a description of Saxon boundaries of land: "Thence to the limit of a

[23] Goldastus, in his Constitutiones Imperiales, vol. ii. p. 41., has the Henrici I. Aucupis leges hastiludiales sive de torneamentis, which, he says, were latæ Gottingæ in Saxonia, 938. The author of the Aquila Saxonica, p. 27., says, it should be 934. These leges are also mentioned in Fabricius, Hist. Sax. i. p. 122. The Aquila Saxonica quotes also at length other statuta et privilegia of these games, made at Magdeburg. This imperial document contradicts the opinion, that tournaments originated in 1066, which Dufresne gives, 3 Gloss. Med. 1147. Wittichind, who addressed his history to the grand-daughter of Henry, expressly says of this emperor, "In exercitiis quoque ludi tanta eminentia superabat omnes ut terrorem cæteris ostentaret," p. 15. Previous to this, Nithard mentions, that some French gentlemen fought in play on horseback.

[24] Goldastus, ubi supra.

[25] Aquila Saxonica, p. 28, 29., where the other provisions, established for the regulation of the tournaments, may be seen.

banner, coat of mail, and helmet, both of the kings and of Eadbald in an ash-tree." [26]

No shield-maker was allowed to put a sheep's skin on a shield.[27] Was this provision made to favour the manufacture of parchment for their books?

[26] Hem. Chart. p. 7.

[27] Wilk. Leg. p. 59. I observe another passage in the canons of Edgar relating to cnihtes: "We teach that every priest should have at the synods his cleric, and a fit man *to cnihte*, and no one unwise that loves folly." Wilk. Leg. p. 82. This is not a passage applicable to a boy, but to a manly attendant on the superior priests at the great councils.

## CHAP. XIII.

*Their Superstitions.*

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THE belief, that some human beings could attain the power of inflicting evils on their fellow-creatures, and of controlling the operations of nature, existed among the Anglo-Saxons, but did not originate with them. It has appeared in all the regions of the globe; and from its extensive prevalence we may perceive that the human mind, in its state of ignorance and barbarism, is a soil well adapted to its reception and cultivation. It is not true that fear first made a deity; but it cannot be doubted that fear, vanity, and hope, are the parents of superstition.

Life has so many diseases which the uninstructed mind cannot remedy or avert, and encourages so many hopes which every age and condition burn to realise, that it is not surprising to find a large portion of mankind the willing prey of impostors, practising on their credulity by threats of evil and promises of good, greater than the usual course of nature would dispense. In every country where the intelligent religions of Judaism or Christianity were unknown, these delusions obtained a kind of legal sovereignty, and peculiarly in Thrace and Chaldea. But that such frauds and absurdities should be countenanced, where the genuine revelations of the Divine wisdom prevail, may reasonably excite both our astonishment and regret, especially as they have been steadily discountenanced by both civil and ecclesiastical laws. Their foundation seems to lie deep in the heart's anxiety

about futurity; in its impatience for good greater than it enjoys; and in its restless curiosity to penetrate the unknown, and to meddle with the forbidden.

But the superstitions of magic and witchcraft began among the civilised nations of the earth, and prevailed even in Greece and Rome, before the Saxons are known to have had an historical existence. The general diffusion of the fond mistake forbids us to derive the later impostures from those which preceded; but as every thing that was popular among the Romans must have scattered some effects on the nations with whom they had intercourse, we will glance at the opinions which the masters of the world, who so long colonised our island, admitted on this delusive subject.

We are familiar in our youth with the incantations alluded to by Virgil and Horace, and described by Lucan: it is still more amusing to read of Apuleius, who flourished under the Antonines, and who, though born in Africa, was educated at Athens, that he was accused of magic arts, and of having obtained a rich wife by his incantations. In his Metamorphoseon we have a curious picture of the witchcraft which was believed to exist in the ancient world. One of his characters is described as a saga, or witch[1], who could lower the sky, and raise the manes of the dead. She is stated to have transformed one lover into a beaver, another into a frog, and another into a ram; to have condemned a rival wife to perpetual gestation; to have closed up impregnably all the houses of a city, whose inhabitants were going to stone her; and to have transported the family of the authors of the commotion to the top of a distant mountain.

Another lady of similar taste is mentioned to have

[1] Apul. Metamorph. lib. i. p. 6.

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been a maga, mistress of every sepulchral song, who by twigs, little stones, and such like petty instruments, could submerge all the light of the world in the lowest Tartarus, and into ancient chaos; who could turn her lovers that displeased her into stones or animals, or entirely destroy them.[2]

Apuleius afterwards gives us a description of one of her achievements. In the dead of the night, as two friends are sleeping in a room, the doors burst open with great fury; the bed of one is overturned upon him; two witches enter, one carrying a light, the other a sponge and a sword. This stabs her sleeping faithless lover, plunges the weapon up to its hilt in his throat, receives all the blood in a vessel, that not a drop might appear, and then takes out his heart. The other applied her sponge to the wounds, saying "Sponge! sea-born! beware of rivers!" The consequence was, that though he waked, and travelled as well as ever, yet when on his journey he approached a river, and proceeded to drink at it, his wounds opened, the sponge flew out, and the victim fell dead.[3]

Apuleius himself was a great student of magic. The chief seat of all these wonders is declared to have been Thessaly; and so popular was the notion of witchcraft among those nations whom in our youth we are taught almost exclusively to admire, that even

[2] Apul. Metamorph. lib. i. p. 21.

[3] Mr. Cumberland in his Observer, No. 31., has noticed the magical powers ascribed in the Clementine recognitions, and Constit. Apos. to Simon Magus, viz. That he created a man out of the air; that he had the power of being invisible; that he could make marble as penetrable as clay; could animate statues; resist the effects of fire; present himself with two faces, like Janus; metamorphose himself into a sheep or a goat; fly at pleasure through the air; create gold in a moment; and at a wish, take a scythe in his hand and mow a field of corn almost at a stroke; and recall the unjustly murdered to life. A woman of public notoriety looking out of the window of a castle on a great crowd below, he was said to have made her appear, and then fall down from every window of the place at the same time. To these fancies Anastacius Nicenus added, that Simon was frequently preceded by spectres, which he declared to be the spirits of certain persons that were dead. It is extraordinary that the ancients framed no romantic tales on imaginations so favourable to interesting fiction.

philosophers thought that they accounted sufficiently for the miracles of the Christian legislator, by referring them to magic.

We will consider the Anglo-Saxon superstitions under the heads of their witchcraft, their charms, and their prognostics.

Their pretenders to witchcraft were called wicca, scin-læca, galdor-cræftig, wiglær, and morthwyrtha. Wiglær is a combination from wig, an idol or a temple, and lær, learning, and may have been one of the characters of the Anglo-Saxon idolatry. He was the wizard, as wicca was the witch. Scin-læca was a species of phantom or apparition, and was also used as the name of the person who had the power of producing such things: it is, literally, a shining dead body. Galdor-cræftig implies, one skilled in incantations; and morthwyrtha is, literally, a worshipper of the dead.

Another general appellation for such personages was dry, a magician. The clergy opposed these follies in their homilies[4]; and their exhortations imply that some had the knavery to attempt to practise them.

The laws notice these practices with penal severity. The best account that can be given of them will be found in the passages proscribing them.

"If any wicca, or wiglær, or false swearer, or morthwyrtha, or any foul, contaminated, manifest horcwenan, (whore quean or strumpet,) be any where in the land, man shall drive them out."[5]

"We teach that every priest shall extinguish all heathendom, and forbid wilweorthunga (fountain

[4] Thus, in a homily against auguries, it is said, "That the dead should rise through dry-cræft, deofol gild, wicc-cræft, and wiglunga, is very abominable to our Saviour; and they that exercise these crafts are God's enemies, and truly belong to the deceitful devil, with him to dwell for ever in eternal punishment." MSS. Bodl. Wanl. Cat. p. 42.

[5] Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. p. 53.

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worship), and licwiglunga (incantations of the dead), and hwata (omens), and galdra (magic), and man-worship, and the abominations that men exercise in various sorts of witchcraft, and in frithsplottum, and with elms and other trees, and with stones, and with many other phantoms."[6]

From subsequent regulations, we find that these practices were made the intruments of the most fatal mischief; for penitentiary penalties are enjoined if any one should destroy another by wiccecræft; or if any should drive sickness on a man; or if death should follow from the attempt.[7]

They seem to have used philtres; for it is also made punishable if any should use witchcraft to produce another's love, or should give him to eat or to drink with magic.[8] They were also forbid to wiglian by the moon.[9] Canute renewed the prohibitions. He enjoined them not to worship the sun or the moon, fire or floods, wells or stones, or any sort of tree; not to love wiccecræft, or frame death-spells, either by lot or by torch; nor to effect any thing by phantoms.[10] From the Pœnitentiale of Theodore we also learn, that the power of letting loose tempests was pretended to.[11]

Another name for their magical arts was unlybban wyrce, literally, destructive of life. The penitence is prescribed for a woman who kills a man by unlybban. One instance of their philtres is detailed to us. A woman resolving to destroy her step-son, or to alienate from him his father's affection, sought a witch, who knew how to change minds by art and enchantments. Addressing such a one with promises and rewards, she enquired how the mind of the father

[6] Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. p. 83. [7] Ibid. p. 93.
[8] Ibid. [9] MS. Tib. A. 3. [10] Wilkins, p. 134.
[11] Spelm. Concil. 155. They dreaded spectres; and one of their medical recipes is, "If a man suffer from a scinlac, or spectre, let him eat lion's flesh, and he will never suffer from any scinlac again." Cott. MSS. Vitell. C. 3.

might be turned from the child, and be fixed on herself. The magical medicament was immediately made, and mixed with the husband's meat and drink. The catastrophe of the whole was the murder of the child; and the discovery of the crime by the assistant, to revenge the step-mother's ill-treatment.[12]

The charms used by the Anglo-Saxons were innumerable. They trusted in their magical incantations for the cure of disease[13], for the success of their tillage[14], for the discovery of lost property[15], for uncharming cattle, and for the prevention of casualties.[16] Specimens of their charms for these purposes still remain to us. Bede tells us, that "many, in times of disease (neglecting the sacraments), went to the erring medicaments of idolatry, as if to restrain God's chastisements by incantations, phylacteries, or any other secret of the demoniacal arts." [17]

Their prognostics, from the sun and moon, from thunder, and from dreams, were so numerous, as to display and to perpetuate a most lamentable debility of mind. Every day of every month was catalogued as a propitious or unpropitious season for certain transactions. We have Anglo-Saxon treatises which contain rules for discovering the future fortune and disposition of a child, from the day of his nativity. One day was useful for all things; another, though good to tame animals, was baleful to sow seeds. One day was favourable to the commencement of business; another to let blood; and others wore a forbidding aspect to these and other things. On this day they were to buy, on a second to sell, on a third to hunt, on a fourth to do nothing. If a child

[12] 3 Gale's Script. p. 439.

[13] For incantations to cure various diseases, see Wanley's Catalogue of Saxon MSS., p. 44. 115. 231, 232. 234. 305.

[14] For charms to make fields fertile, see Wanley, p. 98. 225.

[15] For charms to find lost cattle, or any thing stolen, see Wanley, p. 114. 186.

[16] For amulets against poison, disease, and battle, see also Wanley.

[17] Bede, lib. iv. c. 27.

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were born on such a day, it would live; if on another its life would be sickly; if on another it would perish early. In a word, the most alarming fears, and the most extravagant hopes, were perpetually raised by these foolish superstitions, which tended to keep the mind in the dreary bondage of ignorance and absurdity, which prevented the growth of knowlege, by the incessant war of prejudice, and the slavish effects of the most imbecile apprehensions.[18]

The same anticipations of futurity were made by noticing on what day of the week or month it first thundered, or the new moon appeared, or the new-year's day occurred. Dreams likewise had regular interpretations and applications; and thus life, instead of being governed by the councils of wisdom, or the precepts of virtue, was directed by those solemn lessons of gross superstition, which the most ignorant peasant of our days would be ashamed to avow.[19] How lamentable is it that mankind should have such an inveterate propensity to resort to the meanest agencies, and the most capricious accidents of nature, for aid or comforts in their anxieties and difficulties, rather than to confide in its Author, solicit his kindness, or resign themselves to his will; rather than calmly await his benevolent dispensations, and trust to his discernment for the fittest season of their occurrence and duration.[20]

[18] See especially MS. Tiberius, A. 3., and Bede's works on these subjects. A few specimens may amuse: "On the first night of the moon, go to the king and ask what you like. Whatever you see at the first appearance of the new moon will be a blessing to you. In the beginning of the moon it is useful to do any thing. If a man be born on a Sunday he will live without trouble all his life. If t thunder in the evening some great person is born. If new-year's day be on a Monday it will be a grim and confounding winter. When you see a bee fast in the briar, wish what you please, and it will not fail you."

[19] Some of their fancies: "If a man dream that he hath a burning candle in his hand it is a sign of good. If he dream that he sees an eagle over his head it implies dignity to him, and the greater, the higher the bird flies. Whatever we dream on the first night of the old moon will become joyful to us."

[20] Even while this page is penning, one Gipsy is offering her prognostications, surprised at being refused; and another is employed in a neighbouring garden, by three intellectual beings, to delude them by her random predictions, which she afterwards ridicules them for believing!

It is, however, an act of impartial justice to our ancestors, and to others, to remark that the superstitions into which the various branches of human society have diverged in pagan as well as Christian countries, however they may surprise us by their absurdity, or displease us by their mischievous effects, have yet usually sprung from some good principle that has been erroneously applied or injuriously perverted. The superstitions connected with divination are eminently of this character. Whether the pecking of chickens; the appearance of eagles; the direction of the flight of birds; the state of a brute's entrails; the drawing of twigs; the neighing of a horse; the rolling of thunder; the flowing of a victim's blood, or the ravings of a maniac, were, like the prognostics of the Anglo-Saxons, the criterion adopted; yet the founding principle always was a desire to be guided by the Divine will, and therefore to discover it; a hope that this was possible, and a belief that the means selected and hallowed by their religious faith or popular fancies would be the channel through which the superior direction or communication would be imparted.

They assumed that the Deity would indicate his will and dicisions by the mediums which they appropriated to be his instruments for this purpose; and it was the determination of the Divine mind that they venerated and obeyed when they made birds its interpreters: as Lord Herbert of Cherbury, who discredited nearly all religious institutions, admitted in his own case a soft roll of distant thunder to be the appointed messenger to him from the same Divine sovereignty, that he should execute the purpose he was meditating. Hence, in giving these superstitions such an influence over their conduct, the Anglo-Saxons did no more than what Persians, Greeks, Romans, and many modern Europeans, even of cul-

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tivated minds, have done without being thought peculiarly ridiculous. All perversions of a good principle, and all such false superstitions, are vicious and degrading; but the degradation applies equally to all nations, and to all ages who have used them, and must not be charged with any emphatic censure or contempt on our imitating, but not therefore weak-minded ancestors.

It is our wisdom to desire the Divine guidance, and to implore it. It is our folly to seek its voice and will in the whims and devices of our doting imaginations. The great outlines of the sublime Mind, whose direction the human heart in all ages, and the wisest intellects in the most cultivated, so anxiously seek for, are delineated in the sacred volumes which form our true faith and present to us our dearest hopes. Enlightened by what these reveal, and acting on their tuition, we may believe as Socrates, Plato, Scipio, and Epictetus thought, and as every Christian apostle teaches, that the further assistance which we reverentially solicit will be silently and imperceptibly imparted whenever necessary, and will give us that true prudence of mind and judgment, which is always most effective and most unerring when it flows from this high origin, and is kept in continual union with its venerated Giver.[21]

[21] The true etymology of Prudentia seems to be, that it was at first an abbreviation of Providentia in the loftiest sense of that word, and subsequently came to signify also those human præ-videntia and præ-audientia, which now form its common meaning and ethical appropriation.

## CHAP. XIV.

### *Their Funerals.*



THE northern nations, at one period, burnt their dead. But the custom of interring the body had become established among the Anglo-Saxons, at the æra when their history began to be recorded by their Christian clergy, and was never discontinued.

Their common coffins were wood; the more costly were stone. Thus a nun who had been buried in a wooden coffin was afterwards placed in one of stone.[1] Their kings were interred in stone coffins[2]; they were buried in linen[3], and the clergy in their vestments.[4] In two instances mentioned by Bede, the coffin was provided before death.[5] We also read of the place of burial being chosen before death, and sometimes of its being ordered by will.[6]

With the common sympathy of human nature, friends are described as attending, in illness, round the bed of the deceased. On their departure, we read of friends tearing their clothes and hair.[7] One who died, is mentioned to have been buried the next day.[8] As Cuthbert, the eleventh bishop from Augustin, obtained leave to make cemeteries within cities[9], we may infer that the more healthful custom, of depositing the dead at some distance from the habitations of the living, was the general practice; but afterwards it became the custom of England to bury the dead in

[1] Bede, lib. iv. c. 19.
[2] Ibid. c. 4.
[3] Ibid. c. 19.
[4] Ibid. p. 261.
[5] Ibid. lib. v. c. 5. and lib. iv. c. 11.
[6] 3 Gale Script. 470.
[7] Eddius, p. 64.
[8] Bede, p. 302.
[9] Dugd. Mon. i. p. 25.

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the churches. The first restriction to this practice was the injunction that none should be so buried, unless it was known that in his life he had been acceptable to God. It was afterwards ordered, that no corpse should be deposited in a church, unless of an ecclesiastic, or a layman so righteous as to deserve such a distinction. All former tombs in churches were directed to be made level with the pavement, so that none might be seen; and if in any part, from the number of the tombs, this was difficult to be done, then the altar was to be removed to a purer spot, and the occupied place was to become merely a burying-ground.[10]

Some of their customs at death may be learnt from the following narrations. It is mentioned in Dunstan's life, that Æthelfleda, when on her death-bed, said to him, "Do thou, early in the morning, cause the baths to be hastened, and the funeral vestments to be prepared, which I am about to wear; and after the washing of my body, I will celebrate the mass, and receive the sacrament; and in that manner I will die."[11]

The sickness, death, and burial of archbishop Wilfrid, in the eighth century, is described with these particulars. On the attack of his illness, all the abbots and anchorites near were unwearied in their prayers for his recovery. He survived, with his senses; and power of speech returned, for a year and a half. A short time before his death, he invited two abbots and six faithful brethren to attend him, and desired them to open his treasure-chest with a key.

[10] Wilk. Leg. Anglo-Sax. p. 179. p. 84.

[11] MSS. Cleop. B. 13. This life has been printed in the Acta Sanctorum for May, from a MS. brought from the Vedastine monastery at Rome. This MS. differs from the Cotton MS. in some particulars. It has the preface, which the Cotton MS. wants; but it has not two pages of the conclusion, which are in the Cotton MS. In the body of the Roman MS. there are forty-two hexameters which are not in the Cotton MS.

The gold, silver, and precious stones therein were brought out, and divided into four parts, as he directed. One of these he ordered to be sent to the churches at Rome, as a present for his soul; another part was to be divided among the poor of his people; a third he gave to some monasteries, to obtain therewith the friendship of the kings and bishops; and the fourth he destined to those who had shared in his labours, and to whom he had not given lands.

After his death, one of the abbots spread his linen garments on the ground. The brethren laid his body on them, washed it with their hands, and put on his ecclesiastical dress. Afterwards they wrapped it in linen, and singing hymns, they conducted it in a carriage to the monastery. All the monks came out to meet it; none abstained from tears and weeping. They received it with hymns and chantings, and deposited it in the church which he had built.[12]

One of the nobles who attended the king at his Easter court, having died, it is mentioned that his body was carried to Glastonbury; and the king ordered some of the bishops, earls, and barons, to attend the bier thither with honour.[13]

When the body of an alderman was taken to the monastery at Ramsay to be buried, a numerous assemblage from the neighbourhood met to accompany his exequies.[14]

The saul-sceat, or the payment of the clergy on death, became a very general practice. No respectable person died or was buried without a handsome present to some branch or other of the ecclesiastical establishment.

Nothing can more strongly express the importance and necessity of this custom, than that several of their

[12] Eddius, p. 89.
[13] 3 Gale Script. p. 395.
[14] Ibid. p. 428.

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gilds seem to have been formed chiefly with a view to provide a fund for this purpose.

It appears in all the wills. Thus Wynflæd, for her saul-sceat, gave to every one of the religious, at the places she mentions, a mancus of gold; and to another place, half a pound's worth, for saul-sceat. She adds a direction to her children, that they will illuminate for her soul.

Byrhtric, for his soul and his ancestors, gave two sulings of land by his will, and a similar present, with thirty gold mancys, for his wife's soul and her ancestors.[15] Wulfaru bequeaths to Saint Peter's minster, for his "miserable soul," and for his ancestors, a bracelet, a patera, two golden crosses, with garments and bed-clothes.[16]

A dux who flourished in the days of Edgar and Æthelred, not only gave an abbot some valuable lands, in return for his liberal hospitality, but also several others, with thirty marks of gold, and twenty pounds of silver, two golden crosses, two pieces of his cloak, set with gold and gems in valuable workmanship, and other things, that, if he fell in battle, his body might be buried with them.[17]

A dux in Alfred's days directed one hundred swine to be given to a church in Canterbury, for him and for his soul; and the same to Chertsey abbey. The same dux directed two hundred peninga to be paid annually from some land to Chertsey abbey, for the soul of Alfred.[18]

So Æthelstan the ætheling gave to St. Peter's church, at Westminster, land which he had bought of his father for two hundred mancusan of gold, five pounds of silver by weight, and some land, which he

[15] Hickes, Diss. Ep. 51.
[16] Ibid. p. 54.
[17] 3 Gale Script. 494.
[18] Test. Ælf. App. Sax. Dict.

had purchased for two hundred and fifty gold mancus by weight; and the land which his father released to him, for both their souls: he makes other bequests to other religious places.[19]

[19] App. Sax. Dict. If the body was buried out of the "riht scire," or parish, the soul's sceat was to be paid to the minister to which he belonged. Wilk. Leg. 121. 108. It was to be always given at the open grave. Ib. 108.

# BOOK VIII.

*The* GOVERNMENT *and* CONSTITUTION *of the* ANGLO-SAXONS.

## CHAP. I.

*The* KING'S *Election and Coronation.*

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IN treating of the Anglo-Saxon government it will be proper to begin with the cyning, or king, who, though he did not concentrate in himself the despotism of an eastern monarch, was yet elevated far above the rest of the nation in dignity, property, and power.

The witena-gemot may then be considered, and afterwards the official dignities respected by the nation. Our subject will be closed by a review of the contributions levied from the people.

The first cynings of the Anglo-Saxons seem to have been their war-kings continued for life; and the crown was not hereditary, but elective. Many authors, both in the Anglo-Saxon times and afterwards, when speaking of their accessions, express them in terms which signify election. Thus, the contemporary author of Dunstan's life says of Edwin, "After him arose Eadwig, son of king Edmund, in age a youth, and with little of the prudence of reigning; *elected*, he filled up the number and names of the kings over both people." It proceeds afterwards to mention, that, abandoning Eadwig, they chose (eligere) Eadgar to be king.[1]

It was the witena-gemot who elected the cyning.

[1] MS. Cleop. B. 13. p. 76. 78.

The council, in 785, directs, that "lawful kings be chosen by the priests and elders of the people."[2] The author of the life of Dunstan says, "When at the time appointed he was by all the chiefs of the English, by general election, to be anointed and consecrated king."[3] Ethelred recites himself, in a charter, that all the optimates had unanimously chosen his brother Edward to rule the helm of the kingdom.[4] Alfred is stated to have been chosen by the ducibus et presulibus of all the nation.[5] Edward and Athelstan are also described as "a primatis electus."[6]

Sometimes the election is mentioned as if other persons besides the witan were concerned in it. Thus, the Saxon Chronicle says, that after Ethelred's death all the witan who were in London, and *the citizens*, chose Edmund to cinge.[7] It says afterwards, that when Canute died there was a gemot of all the witan at Oxford; and earl Leofric, and most of the thegns north of the Thames, and *the lithsmen* at London, chose Harold. The earl Godwin, and all the yldestan men in West Saxony, opposed it as long as they could.[8]

But, from the comparison of all the passages on this subject, the result seems to be, that the king was elected at the witena-gemot held on the demise of the preceding sovereign; and these citizens and lithsmen were probably the more popular part of the national council, the representatives of the cities and burghs. The name of lithsmen would suit those of the maritime burghs, afterwards, as now, called the cinque-ports.

That the accession of the Anglo-Saxon sovereigns was not governed by the rules of hereditary succession,

[2] Spelm. Concil. p. 296.
[3] MS. Cleop. p. 76.
[4] MS. Claud. c. 9. p. 123.
[5] Simeon Dunel. 126. 127
[6] Ethelwerd, 847. Malmbs. 48.
[7] Sax. Chron. p. 148.
[8] Ibid. p. 154.

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is manifest from their history. The dynasties of Wessex were more steady and regular than any others in the octarchy. Yet the son of its third king, Cealwin, did not succeed, though he existed. The son of Ceolwulf was equally passed by. Ceadwalla left two sons, yet Ina acceded, to their prejudice; and, what is singular, Ina was elected king, though his father was alive. Some other irregularities of the same sort took place before Egbert, and continued after him.

Ethelbert, the second son of Ethelwulph, left sons, and yet Ethelred succeeded in their stead. They were still excluded, when Alfred and his son received the crown. So Athelstan, though illegitimate, was chosen in preference to his legitimate brothers. On Edgar's death, both his eldest and youngest sons were made candidates for the crown, though Edward was preferred; and although Edmund Ironside left a son, his brother, Edward the Confessor, after the Danish reigns, was preferred before him. To the exclusion of the same prince, Harold the Second obtained his election.

But though the Saxon witan continued the custom of election, and sometimes broke the regular line of descent, by crowning the collateral branches, yet in the greatest number of instances they followed the rule of hereditary succession. Their choice of the cyning in Wessex, even when the heir was disregarded, was always made from the family of its first founder, Cerdic, and usually from the kinsmen of the preceding sovereign. The Norman conquest diminished the power of the witena-gemot in this respect, or at least restricted its practical exertion. The form and name of election continued, but it was rather adoption than choice. The crown passed gradually from an elective to an hereditary succession;—a change highly auspicious to the national prosperity,

by precluding the most destructive of all human competitions.

The coronation of Ethelred the Second, and his coronation-oath, have been transmitted to us in Latin, in a MS. yet extant in the Cotton Library.[9] The ceremony was thus ordered: the translation is made literal: some part of it seems to be the composition or the arrangement of Dunstan.—

"Two bishops, with the witan, shall lead him to the church, and the clergy, with the bishops, shall sing the anthem, 'Firmetur manus tua,' and the 'Gloria Patri.'

"When the king arrives at the church, he shall prostrate himself before the altar, and the 'Te Deum' shall be chaunted.

"When this is finished, the king shall be raised from the ground, and *having been chosen* by the bishops and people, shall, with a clear voice, before God and all the people, promise that he will observe these three rules."

"*The Coronation Oath.*

'In the name of Christ, I promise three things to the Christian 'people, my subjects:

'First, That the church of God, and all the Christian people, 'shall always preserve true peace under our auspices.

'Second, That I will forbid rapacity and all iniquities to every 'condition.

'Third, That I will command equity and mercy in all judgments, 'that to me and to you the gracious and merciful God may extend 'his mercy.'

"All shall say, Amen. These prayers shall follow, which the bishops are separately to repeat:—

'We invoke thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty and Eternal 'God, that this thy servant, (whom, by the wisdom of thy divine 'dispensations from the beginning of his formation to this present 'day, thou hast permitted to increase, rejoicing in the flower of 'youth,) enriched with the gift of thy piety, and full of the grace 'of truth, thou mayest cause to be always advancing, day by day, 'to better things before God and men: that, rejoicing in the 'bounty of supernal grace, he may receive the throne of supreme 'power; and defended on all sides from his enemies by the wall of 'thy mercy, he may deserve to govern happily the people com-'mitted to him with the peace of propitiation and the strength 'of victory.'"

"*Second Prayer.*

'O God, who directest thy people in strength, and governest 'them with love, give this thy servant such a spirit of wisdom with

[9] MS. Claud. A. 3.

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'the rule of discipline, that, devoted to thee with his whole heart, 'he may remain in his government always fit, and that by thy 'favour the security of this church may be preserved in his time, 'and Christian devotion may remain in tranquillity; so that, per-'severing in good works, he may attain, under thy guidance, to 'thine everlasting kingdom.'

"After a third prayer, the consecration of the king by the bishop takes place, who holds the crown over him, saying, —

'Almighty Creator, Everlasting Lord, Governor of heaven and 'earth, the Maker and Disposer of angels and men, King of kings 'and Lord of lords! who made thy faithful servant Abraham to 'triumph over his enemies, and gavest manifold victories to Moses 'and Joshua, the prelates of thy people; and didst raise David, 'thy lowly child, to the summit of the kingdom, and didst free 'him from the mouth of the lion and the paws of the bear, and 'from Goliah, and from the malignant sword of Saul and his 'enemies; who didst endow Solomon with the ineffable gift of 'wisdom and peace: look down propitiously on our humble prayers, 'and multiply the gifts of thy blessing on this thy servant, whom, 'with humble devotion, *we have chosen* to be king of the Angles 'and the Saxons. Surround him every where with the right 'hand of thy power, that, strengthened with the faithfulness of 'Abraham, the meekness of Moses, the courage of Joshua, the 'humility of David, and the wisdom of Solomon, he may be well-'pleasing to thee in all things, and may always advance in the 'way of justice with inoffensive progress.

'May he so nourish, teach, defend, and instruct the church of 'all the kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons, with the people annexed 'to it; and so potently and royally rule it against all visible and 'invisible enemies, that the royal throne of the Angles and Saxons 'may not desert his sceptre, but that he may keep their minds in 'the harmony of the pristine faith and peace! May he, supported 'by the due subjection of the people, and glorified by worthy love, 'through a long life, descend to govern and establish it with the 'united mercy of thy glory! Defended with the helmet and in-'vincible shield of thy protection, and surrounded with celestial 'arms, may he obtain the triumph of victory over all his enemies, 'and bring the terror of his power on all the unfaithful, and shed 'peace on those joyfully fighting for thee! Adorn him with the 'virtues with which thou hast decorated thy faithful servants; 'place him high in his dominion, and anoint him with the oil of 'the grace of thy Holy Spirit!'

"Here he shall be ANOINTED with oil; and this anthem shall be sung:—

'And Zadoc the priest, and Nathan the prophet, anointed So-'lomon king in Sion; and, approaching him, they said, May the 'king live for ever!'

"After two appropriate prayers, the SWORD was given to him, with this invocation:—

'God! who governest all things, both in heaven and in earth, 'by thy providence, be propitious to our most Christian king, 'that all the strength of his enemies may be broken by the virtue 'of the spiritual sword, and that Thou combating for him, they 'may be utterly destroyed!'

"The king shall here be CROWNED, and shall be thus addressed:—

'May God crown thee with the crown of glory, and with the 'honour of justice, and the labour of fortitude; that by the virtue 'of our benediction, and by a right faith, and the various fruit 'of good works, thou mayest attain to the crown of the everlasting 'kingdom, through His bounty whose kingdom endures for ever!'

"After the crown shall be put upon his head, this prayer shall be said:—

'God of eternity! Commander of the virtues! the Conqueror 'of all enemies! bless this thy servant, now humbly bending his 'head before thee, and preserve him long in health, prosperity, 'and happiness. Whenever he shall invoke thine aid, be speedily 'present to him, and protect and defend him. Bestow on him the 'riches of thy grace; fulfil his desires with every good thing, and 'crown him with thy mercy.'

"The SCEPTRE shall be here given to him, with this address:—

'Take the illustrious sceptre of the royal power, the rod of thy 'dominion, the rod of justice, by which mayest thou govern thyself 'well, and the holy church and Christian people committed by the 'Lord to thee! Mayest thou with royal virtue defend us from 'the wicked; correct the bad, and pacify the upright; and that 'they may hold the right way, direct them with thine aid, so that 'from the temporal kingdom thou mayest attain to that which is 'eternal, by His aid whose endless dominion will remain through 'every age!'

"After the sceptre has been given, this prayer follows:—

'Lord of all! Fountain of good! God of all! Governor of go-'vernors! bestow on thy servant the dignity to govern well, and 'strengthen him that he become the honour granted him by thee! 'Make him illustrious above every other king in Britain! Enrich 'him with thine affluent benediction, and establish him firmly in 'the throne of his kingdom! Visit him in his offspring, and grant 'him length of life! In his day may justice be pre-eminent; so 'that, with all joy and felicity, he may be glorified in thine ever-'lasting kingdom!'

"The ROD shall be here given to him, with this address:—

'Take the rod of justice and equity; by which thou mayest un-'derstand how to soothe the pious and terrify the bad; teach the

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'way to the erring; stretch out thine hand to the faltering; abase 'the proud; exalt the humble, that Christ our Lord may open to 'thee the door, who says of himself, I am the door; if any enter 'through me, he shall be saved. And HE who is the key of 'David, and the sceptre of the house of Israel, who opens and no 'one can shut; who shuts and no one can open; may he be thy 'helper! HE who bringeth the bounden from the prison-house, 'and the one sitting in darkness and the shadow of death! that in 'all things thou mayst deserve to follow him of whom David sang, 'Thy seat, O God, endureth for ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom 'is a right sceptre. Imitate him who says, Thou hast loved 'righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, 'has anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.'

"The benedictions follow:—

'May the Almighty Lord extend the right hand of his blessing, 'and pour upon thee the gift of his protection, and surround thee 'with a wall of happiness, and with the guardianship of his care; 'the merits of the holy Mary; of Saint Peter, the prince of the 'Apostles; and of Saint Gregory, the apostle of the English; and 'of all the Saints, interceding for thee!

'May the Lord forgive thee all the evil thou hast done, and 'bestow on thee the grace and mercy which thou humbly askest 'of him; may he free thee from all adversity, and from all the 'assaults of visible or invisible enemies!

'May he place his good angels to watch over thee, that they 'always and every where may precede, accompany, and follow 'thee; and by his power may he preserve thee from sin, from the 'sword, and every accident and danger!

'May he convert thine enemies to the benignity of peace and 'love, and make thee gracious and amiable in every good thing; 'and may he cover those that persecute and hate thee with salu-'tary confusion; and may everlasting sanctification flourish upon 'thee!

'May he always make thee victorious and triumphant over thine 'enemies, visible or invisible; and pour upon thy heart both the 'fear and the continual love of his holy name, and make thee 'persevere in the right faith and in good works, granting thee 'peace in thy days; and with the palm of victory may he bring 'thee to an endless reign!

'And may he make them happy in this world, and the partakers 'of his everlasting felicity, who have willed to make thee king 'over his people!

'Bless, Lord, this elected prince, thou who rulest for ever the 'kingdoms of all kings.

'And so glorify him with thy blessing, that he may hold the 'sceptre of Solomon with the sublimity of a David,' &c.

'Grant him, by thy inspiration, so to govern thy people, as thou 'didst permit Solomon to obtain a peaceful kingdom.'"

"*Designation of the State of the Kingdom.*

'Stand and retain now the state which thou hast hitherto held 'by paternal succession, with hereditary right, delegated to thee 'by the authority of Almighty God, and our present delivery, that 'is, of all the bishops and other servants of God; and in so much as 'thou hast beheld the clergy nearer the sacred altars, so much 'more remember to pay them the honour due, in suitable places. 'So may the Mediator of God and men confirm thee the mediator 'of the clergy and the common people, on the throne of this king-'dom, and make thee reign with him in his eternal kingdom.'

"This prayer follows: —

'May the Almighty Lord give thee, from the dew of heaven, 'and the fatness of the earth, abundance of corn, wine, and oil! 'May the people serve thee, and the tribes adore thee! Be the 'lord of thy brothers, and let the sons of thy mother bow before 'thee: He who blesses thee shall be filled with blessings, and 'God will be thy helper: May the Almighty bless thee with the 'blessings of the heaven above, and in the mountains and the 'vallies; with the blessing of the deep below; with the blessing 'of the suckling and the womb; with the blessings of grapes and 'apples; and may the blessing of the ancient fathers, Abraham, 'Isaac, and Jacob, be heaped upon thee!

'Bless, Lord, the courage of this prince, and prosper the works 'of his hands; and by thy blessing may his land be filled with 'apples, with the fruits, and the dew of heaven, and of the deep 'below; with the fruit of the sun and moon; from the top of the 'ancient mountains, from the apples of the eternal hills, and from 'the fruits of the earth and its fulness!

'May the blessing of Him who appeared in the bush come upon 'his head; and may the full blessing of the Lord be upon his sons, 'and may he steep his feet in oil!

'With his horn, as the horn of the rhinoceros, may he scatter 'the nations to the extremities of the earth; and may He who has 'ascended to the skies be his auxiliary for ever!'

"Here the coronation ends."

## CHAP. II.

*His Family and Officers.*

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THE Anglo-Saxon queen was crowned, as well as the king, until the reign of Egbert, when this honour was taken from her. The crimes of the preceding queen, Eadburga, occasioned the Anglo-Saxons to depart awhile, in this respect, from the custom of all the German nations.[1] But it was soon restored; for Ethelwulph, on his second marriage, suffered his queen, Judith, to be crowned. An account of the ceremony of her coronation has been preserved by the old Frankish writers.[2]

The custom was not immediately re-assumed in England, because the expressions of Asser imply, that in Alfred's time the disuse of the coronation continued. But, by the time of the second Ethelred it was restored; for after the account of his coronation, the ceremonial of her coronation follows.—She was anointed; and, after a prayer, a ring was given to her, and then she was crowned.[3]

The queen's name is joined with the cyning's in some charters, and it is not unusual to find them signed by her. From them we learn that she often sat in the witena-gemot, even after she became queen-dowager. She had her separate property: for, in a gift of land by Ethelswitha, the queen of Alfred, she gives fifteen manentes, calling them a part of the

[1] Asser, Vit. Alfr. p. 10, 11.

[2] It may be seen in Du Chesne's Collection of the Frankish Historians, tom. ii. p. 423.

[3] Cott. MS. Claud. A. 3.

land of her own power.[4] She had also officers of her own household; for the persons, with whose consent and testimony she made the grant, are called *her* nobles.

The king's sons had lands appropriated for them, even though under age; for Ethelred says, that, on his brother being elected king, "the nobles delivered to me, for my use, the lands belonging to the king's sons." These, on the death of the princes, or on their accession to the sovereignty, became the property of the king; for, he adds, "my brother dying, I assumed the dominion, both of the royal lands, and of those belonging to the king's sons." [5]

Among the royal household we find the disc thegn, or the thegn of his dishes; the hregal thegn, or the thegn of his wardrobe; his hors thegn, or the thegn of his stud; his camerarius, or chamberlain; his propincenarius and pincerna, or cupbearer; his secretaries; his chancellor; and, in an humbler rank, his mægden, his grindende theowa, his fedesl, his ambihtsmith, his horswealh, his geneat, and his laadrinc. But we may remark, that his cupbearer and feeder, or probably taster, were both females. The executive officers of his government will be mentioned hereafter.

[4] MS. Claud. c. 9. p. 105. Some valuable facts and remarks on the Anglo-Saxon queen may be seen in Sergeant Heywood's "Ranks of the People," p. 2—31.
[5] Ibid. p. 123.

## CHAP. III.

*The Dignity and Prerogatives of the* Anglo-Saxon *Cyning.*

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Five descriptions of kings have appeared in the world: the Father at the head of his family; the most ancient sovereign, once exhibited in the Jewish Patriarch, but now perhaps obsolete, unless in the simplicity of some portions of Africa. The Elder, governing his descendants and tribe rather by influence and persuasion than power, as the North American sachems; the Arabian sheiks; and some Tartarian hordes. The Imperator, or military sovereign, commanding among his people as among his soldiers, like the emperors of Rome. The Despot Lord, ruling his nation like his vassal slaves, without check, sympathy, consideration, or responsibility, like the shereffs of Morocco, the dey of Algiers, and, in a great measure, the sultans of Turkey; and the Teutonic Kings, who are neither fathers, elders, imperators, nor despotic lords, but who are a creation of social wisdom far more excellent in conception, and more beneficial in practice than either of the others. The father-king must cease to exist when the family becomes a tribe. The elder king, who then succeeds, suits not a numerous, enterprising, and extensively-spread nation. The imperator, or the despot lord, must then be resorted to, or tyrannical oligarchies, severe aristocracies, or factious democracies, must be substituted; or else an anomalous, and discordant, and not lasting combination of some of these forms; which was attempted at Athens, Carthage, Rome, and Sparta, with no permanent advantage, or possibility of long continuance.

The experience and sagacity of the ancient world went no farther than to use one or other of these institutions. It was reserved for those whom we unjustly call Barbarians, the descendants of the Scythian, Gothic, or Teutonic nomades, to invent, and to reduce to practice, a form of monarchy, under the name of kings, with powers so great, yet so limited; so superior and independent in the theory of law, and yet so subordinate to it, and so governed by it; so majestic, yet so popular; so dignified, yet so watched; so intrusted, yet so criticised; so powerful, yet so counteracted; so honoured, yet so counselled; so wealthy, yet so dependent,—that all the good which sovereignty can impart is enjoyed largely by the nations whom they sway, with as few as possible of the evils which continued power must always tend to occasion, and which no human wisdom, while the executing instruments of its plans are imperfect mortals, can absolutely prevent. Such an institution was the Anglo-Saxon cyning; and such, with all the improvements which a free-spirited nation has at various times added to it, is the British monarchy under which we are now reposing.

The Anglo-Saxon cyning reigned, as his kingly successors reign, by no divine right. His office was the invention, his appointment was the election, of his people; as the succession of our present sovereigns is the ordination of law made by all the orders of the people in their great united parliamentary council. But religion has wisely taught us to consider the reigning sovereign as a consecrated functionary; not to give him the right divine of doing wrong, but to guard his person and character, for the sake of that welfare of the society for which they were created, with all the veneration which can be obtained from human sympathies; and with all that attachment which will most effectually promote the utility of his

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great office. Hence he was, as already shown, anointed, prayed for, and said to reign by the grace of God. Hence, violence to his person has been always considered as a species of sacrilege. Hence, without adopting the impious deification of the Roman emperors, or the analogous adulation with which those of China and the East are to their own moral prejudice surrounded, our kings have been always considered with a degree of religious[1] as well as civil respect, enough to raise them above every other class of society in character as well as dignity and prerogative: but not enough to emancipate them from all legal obligations, nor to elevate them above that law to which both sovereign and people are equally subject. That this state of subordination to the laws was the principle of the Anglo-Saxon royalty we may safely infer from the emphatic words of our ancient and venerable Bracton. The Norman kings were certainly not inferior in power or prerogative to the Anglo-Saxon; yet of the kingly power in his day, that of Henry the Third, and viewing it as connected with the usages of what then was English antiquity, he says,—

"KINGS ought not to be under man, but under God, AND THE LAW, because THE LAW MAKES THE KING. The King ascribes to the Law what the Law ascribes to him; that is, dignity and power: for he is not King where his will governs, and not the Law.[2]

"The King has a superior, God: ALSO THE LAW BY WHICH HE IS MADE KING; also this court, that is, of the earls and barons (the parliament); therefore, if the King should be without a bridle, that is, without Law, They ought to put a bridle upon Him.[3]

"The English laws are not whatever is rashly presumed from the will of the King; but what, with the intention of establishing

[1] Hence Bracton calls the king the Vicarius Dei, p. 5. The minister and vicarius of God, p. 55. But monarchy was not at first very securely established among all the Gothic nations. For among the Burgundians, whose king was called by the general name Hendinos, it was an ancient custom that he might be deposed if the fortune of war turned against him, or if the earth denied an abundant harvest. Bulæus Hist. Univ. Par. i. p. 6.

[2] Bracton, p. 5. [3] Ibid. p. 34.

laws, shall be rightly determined by the council of his magistrates (the parliament), the King presiding in authority, and in the deliberation and discussion having been had upon this subject."[4]

So our ancient law-book, Fleta, written under the successful and powerful Edward the First, thus expresses the same ideas, imitating or copying its predecessor:—

"The King has superiors in ruling the people; as, THE LAW, by which he is made King; and his court, that is, the earls and barons," meaning by these, the parliament.[5]

"The King ought not to have an equal in his kingdom; for an equal has no government over an equal: nor ought he to have any superior but God AND THE LAW. And because BY THE LAW he is made King, it is fit that domination and power should be ascribed to the Law, and should be defended by him on whom THE LAW has bestowed honour and power. He governs badly when a will shall govern in him dissonant to the law.[6]

"He is not called King from reigning, but the name is assumed from well governing. He is a King while he governs well; but a Tyrant when he oppresses his people by his violated domination.[7]

"To this He is *elected* that he may cause justice to be exhibited equally to all who are subject to him, accepting the person of no one: that in him the Lord may sit, and by him decree judgment. It concerns him to defend and sustain what shall be justly judged; because if there was not one who would do justice, peace would easily be exterminated.[8]

"He has the power of coercion, that he may punish and restrain the delinquents; and have it in his power to make the laws, customs, and assizes provided, approved, and sworn in his kingdom, to be firmly observed BY HIMSELF and all his subjects.[9]

"He ought to excel all in his kingdom in power, because He ought not to have a peer, and much more a superior, in administering justice. Yet, though he excel all in power, his heart should be in the hand of God; and that his power may not remain unbridled, let him apply the bridle of temperance and the reins of moderation, that HE be not drawn to do injury, who can do nothing in the land BUT WHAT HE CAN DO BY LAW.[10]

"For this HE IS CREATED AND CHOSEN KING, that he may do justice to all."[11]

It is in the same strain that our judge Fortescue writes, in the reign of Henry the Sixth:—

"The King of England cannot change the laws of his kingdom at his will.[12]

[4] Bracton, p. 107.
[5] Fleta, Proemium.
[6] Fleta, p. 2.
[7] Ibid. p. 16.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid. p. 18.
[12] Fortescue, p. 25.

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"He cannot change the laws without the assent of his subjects; nor burthen his people with strange impositions.[13]

"The statutes of England cannot thus arise, since they are not from the will of the prince, but by the assent of the whole kingdom.[14]

"They are not made by the prudence of one man; or of an hundred counsellors; but of more than three hundred chosen men; as those who know the form of the parliament of England, and the order and manner of its convocation.[15]

"Nor can the King, by himself, or his ministers, impose talliages or subsidies, or any other burthens on his liege people; or change their laws, or establish new ones, without the concession and assent of all his kingdom, expressed in parliament."[16]

It is in the same spirit, and obviously implying the same principles, which these lawyers of Henry the Third, Edward the First, and Henry the Sixth, have expressed more at large, that the still more ancient Glanville, under Henry the Second, in his very short treatise, takes also occasion to say,—

"It will not seem absurd that those English laws should be called LAWS, although not written, which have been promulgated on doubtful things, and in council determined by the advice of the proceres, and acceding authority of the prince."[17]

From this passage we perceive that these unwritten laws were not mere customs, as the common law of England has been sometimes erroneously called, but the actual enactments of the national council of England; and as these principles, from which the ancient interpreters of the law deduced their statements of the royal and parliamentary power in England, are not likely to have originated after the Norman conquest, we may consider them as describing to us some important features of the Anglo-Saxon cyning, and of the Anglo-Saxon witena-gemots.

We will now proceed to collect more distinctly some of the chief traits of the dignity and prerogatives of the cyning, which the Anglo-Saxon remains have preserved for our curiosity.

[13] Fortescue, p. 26. [14] Ibid. p. 40. [15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid. p 84. [17] Glanville Prologus.

The authorities already adduced on the nature of the government of the Saxons on the Continent, lead us to infer, that when Hengist, Ella, Cerdic, and Ida invaded Britain, they and the other chiefs who succeeded in establishing themselves in the island, came with the rank of war-kings, whose power was to continue while hostilities existed.

But to rule a territory extorted by violence from angry natives, who were perpetually struggling to regain it, could scarcely admit of any deposition of the kingly office. The same power and dignity which were requisite to obtain victory were equally wanted, while the hostility lasted, to preserve its conquests. It is, therefore, probable that the first Anglo-Saxon chieftains and their successors were, from necessity and utility, continued on the throne till the kingly dignity became an established, a legal, and a venerated institution.

The circumstance that these war-kings and their associates invaded and conquered the dominions of petty British kings, was also favourable to the establishment of continued royalty. When the British king fell, or retreated before the Saxon war-king, all his advantages became the spoil of his conquerors. The Saxon chief naturally succeeded to the British, the Saxon nobles to the British nobles, and the other invading warriors to the possessions of the free part of the native community.

It is certain, that in the earliest periods of the Anglo-Saxon history, we find the cyning, or king, and all the four orders of noble, free, freed, and servile. Their conversion to Christianity introduced another class, of monks and clergy.

The power and prerogatives of the Anglo-Saxon cyning were progressively acquired. As the nation had no written constitution, their government was

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that of ancient custom, gradually altered from its original features by the new circumstances which occurred. In the course of time, the augmentation of the power of the cyning became indispensable to the happiness of the nation. What could arrange the contentions of right, property, and power, between equal nobles, or between them and the free, and afterwards between them and the church; what could protect the infant state from British hostility, ever jealous, ever bickering, and ever to be mistrusted, but such an institution as continued royalty—as a cyning, raised in dignity and power above all the other chieftains; who could cause the laws of the society to be executed, and their various rights adjusted; to whom every rank could effectually appeal, and who was the protector of every order of the state from violence and wrong?

We have seen that the land swarmed with independent land proprietors of various denominations, whose privileges were not uniform; but whose jurisdictions were generally peculiar and independent. What but a king could, in their age, and with their customs, have rescued the nation from a New Zealand state of general warfare? The institution of the cyning was, therefore, an admirable device, adapted to promote the common interest. It maintained peace between the turbulent chieftains. It insured to every order the enjoyment of its immunities. It was the source whence legal justice was administered to all; and perhaps no single incident tended more to accelerate the Anglo-Saxon civilisation, than the character and prerogatives of the cyning, moderated by the continuance of the witena-gemots, and the free spirit of the people.

It is extremely difficult to describe accurately his privileges and his power. It is remarked by Tacitus, as peculiar to the German nations, that the power of

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their kings was neither unlimited nor free[18]; and that the chieftains governed rather by influence than command. They could neither punish, fetter, nor lash: priests only had these powers, and these severities were submitted to from them as the inflictions of their gods.[19] The ancient Saxons having no king but in war-time, his power could be but temporary; and when it became more permanent, must have been much restricted. As the supreme chief of many other chieftains, whose rights were as sacred as his dignity may have been popular, his authority must have been circumscribed by others. Much of his power at first depended on his personal character and talents. Thus Eadbald had less authority in Kent than his father[20]; while Edwin, in Northumbria, attained to such power, that he had the banner carried before him, not only in battle, but also in his excursions with his ministers through his kingdom, which seems to have been an assumption of dignity and state unknown before.[21] So, Oswin was so beloved for his amiable conduct, that the noblest men of his provinces came from every part to attend and serve him.[22]

The growth of the kingly prerogatives was favoured not only by the energy and talents of the prosperous sovereigns, but also by the natural tendency of such a power to accumulate. The crown was a permanent establishment, which it was the interest of every one but the superior nobles to maintain and to aggrandize, till its power became formidable enough to be felt in its oppressions. Its domains were increasing by every successful war, and its revenue, privileges, and munificence, were perpetually adding to its wealth and influence.

[18] Nec regibus infinita; nec libera potestas. Mor Germ. s. 7.
[19] Mor. Germ. s. 7.
[20] Bede, lib. ii. c. 6.
[21] Ibid. c. 16.
[22] Ibid. c. 14.

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When the zeal of the popes had completed the conversion of the island, and an hierarchy was established, the kingly power received great support and augmentation from the religious veneration with which the clergy surrounded it. That the church, in its weakness, should support the crown, which was its best protector, was a circumstance as natural as that it should afterwards oppose it, when its aggressions became feared.

The laws of Ethelbert, the first Christian king of Kent, who was converted about 600, are the most ancient specimens of the Anglo-Saxon legislation which remain to us. In these[23] the cyning appears already distinguished by a superior rank and privileges. While the mund-byrd of a ceorl was valued at six scillinga, the king's was appointed at fifty. The mulct on homicide in an eorle's residence was twelve scillinga; in a king's fifty. A double penalty was inflicted for injuries done where the cyning was drinking. An offence with his female was punished by a fine of fifty scillinga; while the eorle's occasioned only twelve, and a ceorl's but six. So, though a freeman's theft from a freeman incurred a treble satisfaction, his purloining the king's property was to be nine times compensated.

Another impressive and profitable token of superiority was, that some of the mulcts on offences were paid to him. Thus, if any harm was done to the leode, or people, when the king called them together, the compensation was to be double, and fifty scillinga were to be paid to the king. If any one killed a freeman, the king had a similar sum as his lord. If a freeman stole from others of the same condition, the penalty was to be the king's. If a pregnant woman was forced away, the king had fifteen scillinga.

[23] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 1—7.

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In the laws of Ina, we see the cyning mentioned in a style of authority very much resembling that of subsequent sovereigns. He says, "I, Ina, by the grace of God, king of the West Saxons." He uses the phrase, "*my* bishops." He calls the nobles "*my* ealdormen," and "the oldest sages of *my* people." He adds, "I was consulting on the health of *our* soul and the establishment of *our* kingdom, that right laws, and right cyne domas (kingly judgments), through *our* people, might be settled and confirmed, and that no ealdorman, and none of *our subjects* should violate *our laws*." The laws then are introduced with "*We* command."[24]

One of the provisions in these laws shows the king in the same authoritative and dignified features. "If any one fight in the king's house, he shall forfeit *all* his property, and it shall remain for the king's decision whether he shall have his life or not."[25] The difference between this offence and quarrels elsewhere was very great; for a battle in the church, and in an ealdorman's house, was punished by a fine of 120 scillinga only.

The epithets given by the pope to the first Christian king of the Anglo-Saxons were, "the glorious," and "the most glorious." In several of their letters, the phrase "your glory" is used as synonymous with our expression of "your majesty." The same epithet of "most glorious" is applied by Aldhem to the king of Cornwall, and, by an abbot, to the Frankish king.[26] But this epithet was rather the complimentary language of the day than a phrase appropriated to royalty; for Alphuald, king of East Anglia, writing to Boniface, styles the mitred missionary, "Domino gloriosissimo." A pope, in 634, addresses the king of Northumbria as "your excellency." Boniface, to the

[24] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 14.
[25] Ibid. p. 16.
[26] Bonif. Letters, 16 Mag. Bib. 65. 85.

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king of Mercia, says, "We intreat the clemency of your highness." On another occasion, his superscription is more rhetorical: "To Ethelbald, king, my dearest lord, and in the love of Christ to be preferred to other kings, governing the illustrious sceptre of the empire of the Angles."[27] Another address of the same sort, in Saxon, occurs in a monk's dedication of a saint's life: "To my most loved lord above the earthly kings of all other men, Alfwold, king of the East Angles, ruling his kingdom with right and with dignity."[28]

The titles which the ancient Saxon kings assumed in their charters may be briefly noticed:—"I, Æthelbald, by divine dispensation, king of the Mercians." The powerful Offa simply writes, "Offa, king of the Mercians." Another: "Kenulph, by God's mercy, king of the Mercians." Witlaf's, Burtulph's, and Beorred's, are as unassuming. In the same spirit, Ethelwulph calls himself merely Rex West Saxonum. The style in which Edgar chose to be mentioned is usually very pompous and rhetorical.

Alfred's exordium to his laws is as dignified as Ina's: "I, Alfred, cyning, gathered together and have commanded to be written many of those things that our forefathers held which pleased *me;* and many of those things that liked *me* not *I* have thrown aside, with the advice of my witan, and other things have commanded to be holden."[29]

The subsequent kings, in the same manner, promulged the laws in their own name, with the advice of their witan.

The prerogatives and influence in society of the cyning were great. He was to be prayed for, and voluntarily honoured[30]; his word was to be taken without an oath[31]; he had the high prerogative of pardoning

[27] Bonif. Letters, 16 Mag. Bib.
[28] MS. Vita S. Guthlaci. Cott. Lib.
[29] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 34.
[30] Ibid. p. 10.
[31] Ibid. p. 11.

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in certain cases[32]; his mund-byrd and his were, were larger than those of any other class of society[33]; his safety was protected by high penalties for offences committed in his presence or habitation, or against his family[34]; he had the lordship of the free[35]; he had the option to sell over sea, to kill, or to take the were of a freeman thief; also to sell a theow over sea, or take a penalty[36]; he could mitigate penalties[37]; and could remit them[38]; he had a sele, or tribunal, before whom thieves were brought[39]; he had a tribunal in London[40]; his tribunal was the last court of appeal[41]; he was the executive superintendent of the general laws, and usually received the fines attached to crimes.[42] The Jews were his property[43]; the high executive officers, the ealdormen, the gerefas, the thegns, and others, were liable to be displaced by him.[44] He convoked the councils of the witan[45], and summoned the people to the army, which he commanded.

In the Saxon book of constitutions he is thus spoken of: "The king should be in the place of a father to his people; and, in vigilance and guardianship, a viceroy of Christ, as he is called. It belongs to him and all his family to love Christianity, and shun heathenism. He should respect and defend the church, and tranquillise and conciliate his people by right laws; and by him happiness will be increased. He loves right, and avoids what is not so."[46]

[32] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 20. 65.
[33] Ibid. 71, 72.
[34] Ibid. 22.
[35] Ibid. 2.
[36] Ibid. 12.
[37] Ibid. 77.
[38] Spelm. Conc. p. 485.
[39] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 8.
[40] Ibid. p. 10.
[41] Domesday, in loc.
[42] Heming. Chart. 1. p. 265.
[43] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 203.
[44] Ibid. 109. 122.
[45] Ibid. 109.

[46] Wilk. Leg. p. 147. The exhortations which Alcuin gives to a king of Northumbria will show what the Anglo-Saxons expected or desired their kings to be. After reminding him that man cannot perish like an animal, but must live somewhere else for ever, and happily or miserably according to his actions here, he adds: —

"Love not unjust riches, for all injustice is avenged by God. It is the duty of a king to repress all iniquities by his power, to be just in his judgment, and prone to mercy. God will be merciful to him according as he shows mercy to his subjects. Let him be sober in his morals, true in his words, liberal in his gifts, provident in his councils. Let him choose prudent ministers, who fear God and lead

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His property, on the dissolution of the octarchy, was very extensive in every part of England. Just before Alfred acceded to the crown, there were four kings reigning over the Anglo-Saxons; —the kings of Wessex, Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria. These four sovereignties had absorbed the other four. But when the sword of the Northmen had destroyed the dynasties of Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria, and when the invaders had themselves bent to the power of Alfred, then the Anglo-Saxon cyning rose into great power and property, because the royal power and property of the subdued kingdoms became the right of the ruling king. Alfred united in himself all the regal possessions in England, except those which he allowed the Danish princes to retain in Northumbria and East Anglia. The Northmen were completely subdued by Athelstan; and, when this event took place, the cyning of England became the possessor of all the prerogatives and property which the eight kings of the octarchy had enjoyed. It was this concentration of wealth and privileges, and its consequences, which exalted the cyning to that majesty and power which, in the latter periods of the Anglo-Saxon dynasty, became attached to the throne.

The royal property consisted of lands in demesne in every part of England; and though in the lapse of

an honourable life. He must not covet another's inheritance, nor indulge in avarice, nor in rapine. Often by rapine he loses his own possessions; for the Supreme hears the groans of the oppressed.

"You have seen how the kings your predecessors have perished from their injustice, their rapines, and their profligacy. Dread their ruin. The same God surveys your actions who did not spare their crimes. Many desired to amass supplies by violence and iniquities, and did not foresee that by this conduct they would lose the comfort both of this world and the future. Cultivate then peace, benignity, mercy, justice, and virtue." Ep. 1538.

In another letter to him he says: —

"It does not become you on a throne to live with rustic manners. Anger should not govern you, but reason. Mercy will make you amiable, and cruelty hateful. Let truth only be heard from your mouth. Be chaste, sober, and reputable. Be free in giving, and not covetous in receiving. Let justice adorn your actions, and the form of honourable demeanour distinguish you to all who see you." P. 1554.

time he had given large possessions to his friends and followers, yet from many he reserved rents and services which were a great source of wealth and power. The places which occur with the denomination of royal towns, or royal villas, are very numerous; and among these we may notice the name of Windeshore (Windsor), which is still a regal residence.

His revenues were the rents and produce of his lands in demesne; customs in the sea-ports; tolls in the markets, and in the cities on sales; duties and services to be paid to him in the burghs, or to be commuted for money; wites, or penalties and forfeitures, which the law attached to certain crimes and offences; heriots from his thanes, and various payments and benefits arising to him on the circumstances stated in the laws.

His dignity and influence were displayed and upheld by his liberality, of which specimens will be given in another place.

But all the prerogatives and rights of the Anglo-Saxon cyning were definite and ascertained. They were such as had become established by law or custom, and could be as little exceeded by the sovereign as withheld by his people. They were not arbitrary privileges of an unknown extent. Even William the Conqueror found it necessary to have an official survey of the royal rights taken in every part of the kingdom; and we find the hundred, or similar bodies in every county, making the inquisition to the king's commissioners, who returned to the sovereign that minute record of his claims upon his subjects which constitutes the Domesday-book. The royal claims in Domesday-book were, therefore, not the arbitrary impositions of the throne, but were those which the people themselves testified to their king to have been his legal rights. Perhaps no country in Europe can exhibit such an ancient record of the

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freedom of its people, and the limited prerogatives of its ruler.

The military force was under the command of the king, while it was assembled. It was rather a militia than a regular army. We have already given some notices of its nature: from a certain quantity of land, a fixed number of soldiers were sent, when the king summoned his people to an expedition, who were bound to serve under him for a certain time, apparently two months. Thus, in Berkshire, "when the king sent any where his army, one soldier went from every five hides, and for his victuals or his pay every hide gave him four shillings for two months. This money was not transmitted to the king, but to the soldiers. If any one, after he was summoned to the expedition, did not go, he forfeited to the king all his land. If any who had the right of staying at home promised to send a substitute, and the substitute did not go, the penalty was fifty shillings." In Wiltshire, "when the king went on an expedition by land or sea, he had from Wilton burgh either twenty shillings to feed his buzecarlos, or led one man with him for the honour of five hides." A curious instance of tenure on military service occurs in Heming's Chartularium. The prior of a monastery gave a villa to a miles for life, on condition of his serving for the monastery for it, in the expeditions by sea and land which then frequently took place.

By the laws persons were forbidden to join the fyrd, or expedition, without the king's leave. To depart from it without permission, when the king commanded, was still more severely punished. The loss of life, and the forfeiture of all the offender's property, was the consequence.

The scip fyrd, or naval expedition, was ordered to be always so accelerated as to be ready every year soon after Easter.

It was enacted, that whoever destroyed or injured the people's fyrd scyp should carefully compensate it, and to the king the mund.[47]

So early as in the time of Ina, it was provided, that if a sith-cund man, having land, neglected the fyrd, he should pay one hundred and twenty shillings, and forfeit his land. If he had no land, he was to pay sixty shillings. A ceorl paid thirty shillings as a fyrd-wite.[48]

In this obligation of military service attached to lands, we see the leading principle of the feudal system. Its next principle was that of doing homage to the superior from whom they were held. Did the Anglo-Saxons perform the act of homage? I have met with one passage which implies it. The head of a monastery, finding he could not prevail against an opposing bishop, sought Wulstan as a protector, and did homage to him.[49]

[47] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 122. [48] Ibid. 23.
[49] Petiit Wulstanum fecit que sibi homagium. 3 Gale Script. 482.

## CHAP. IV.

*The Witena-Gemot, or* Anglo-Saxon *Parliament, and of whom composed.*

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The gemot of the witan was the great council of the Anglo-Saxon nation; their parliament, or legislative and supreme judicial assembly. As the highest judicial court of the kingdom, it resembled our present House of Lords. And in those periods, when the peers of the realm represented territorial property rather than hereditary dignities, the comparison between the Saxon witena-gemot and the upper house of our modern parliament might have been more correctly made in their legislative capacity. As the German states are recorded by Tacitus to have had national councils[1], so the continental Saxons are also stated to have possessed them.[2]

If we had no other evidence of the political wisdom of our Gothic or Teutonic ancestors than their institution of the witena-gemots, or national parliaments, this happy and wise invention would be sufficient to entitle them to our veneration and gratitude. For they have not only given to government a form, energy, and direction more promotive of the happiness of mankind than any other species of it has exhibited, but they are the most admirable provision for adapting its exercise and continuance to all the ne circumstances ever arising of society, and for suiting and favouring its continual progress.

Of these assemblies, originating amid the woods and migrations of the Teutonic tribes, one important

[1] Tacitus de Morib. Germ.
[2] Fabricius Hist. Sax. 64. 69. Chronographus Saxo. p. 115.

use has been, to remove from the nation that has possessed and preserved them, the reproach, the bondage, and the misery of an immutable legislation. The Medes and Persians made it their right that their laws should never be changed; not even to be improved. This truly barbaric conception, a favourite dogma also with the kingly priests, or priestly kings of the Nile, and even at Lacedemon, could only operate to curtail society of its fair growth, and to bind all future ages to be as imperfect as the past. It may produce such a political and intellectual monstrosity as Egypt long exhibited, and force a nation to remain a piece of mechanism of bygone absurdity. But internal degradation and discomfort, external weakness, and national inferiority and decay, are the certain accompaniments of a polity so violent and unnatural.

Instead of thus making the times of ignorance, national infancy, and incipient experience, the standard and the laws of a country's future manhood, the Anglo-Saxon witena-gemot, or parliament, was a wise and parental law-giver; not bound in the chains of an obsolete antiquity, but always presiding with a nurturing care; always living, feeling, and acting with the population and circumstances of the day, and providing such regulations, either by alterations of former laws, or by the additions of new ones, as the vicissitudes, novelties, wants, improvement, sentiment, situation, and interest of its co-existing society, in its various classes, were found to be continually needing: sometimes legislating for the benefit of the rich, or the great, or the clergy, or the commercial, or the agriculturist; sometimes for the middling and lower orders; and sometimes collectively for all. Open to petitions, stating the grievences from which certain classes or individuals occasionally suffer, and acquiring thus a knowlege of the wants and feelings of society,

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which no vigilance of its own or of government could by other means obtain: ready to enact new laws, as manifest evils suggest and reasoning wisdom patronises, an English parliament, with all its imperfections, many perhaps inevitable, is,—I speak with reverence, and only use the expression from the want of another, as meaning,—the nearest human imitation of a superintending Providence which our necessities or our sagacity have yet produced or devised. The right of petitioning brings before it all the evils, real or imaginary, that affect the population which it guards; and the popular part being new-chosen at reasonable intervals, from the most educated orders of society, is perpetually renewed with its best talents; and, what is not less valuable, with its living and contemporaneous feelings, fears, hopes, and tendencies. No despotic government, however pure and wise, can have these advantages. It cannot so effectually know what its subjects want. It cannot so well judge what they ought to obtain. It cannot so completely harmonise with the sympathies and flowing mind of the day, because its majesty precludes the acquisition of such identity as a septennial or hexennial election infuses. Whether new members are chosen, or old ones are re-elected, in both cases the election bespeaks their affinity with the hearts and understandings that surround them, and provides this security for a kind, vigilant, and improved legislation more effectually than any other system has yet imparted. Our Anglo-Saxon ancestors had all these advantages, though the peculiar state of their society prevented them from having that full benefit of such a noble institution as we now enjoy. But they were petitioned, and they legislated; and the dom-boc, or laws, of every Anglo-Saxon reign that has survived to us, contains some improvements on the preceding. Some of their members were also most probably

chosen like our own august parliament. The noble tree was then planted and growing, and had begun to produce fruit; though it had not obtained the majestic strength and dilation, and the beauty and fertility of that which now overshadows, protects, and distinguishes the British islands and their dependencies.

But this excellence our Anglo-Saxon parliaments certainly possessed, that they contained the collected feelings and mind of all the classes of the nation, except of the enslaved. The king was always an integral part of their constitution. He summoned, he addressed them; his concurrence was always necessary to their legislation, and he was the organ of its execution. The noble proprietors of land, and of the dignities annexed to it or flowing from it, were also essential members, and sometimes the most powerful. The gentry or thegns, knights, and the official dignities were there, and the chiefs of the clergy who had landed property. The bishops and abbots were always a constituent part, after Christianity was introduced; and if that unhappy portion of the people, which consisted of the slaves of all these orders, had no actual representatives, yet the many provisions for the benefit in the laws show that they possessed humane friends in it, attentive to their interests, and compassionating their degradation: these were probably the king and the clergy. It was the interest of royalty, and congenial with the courteous feelings which have usually accompanied our kings, to increase the number of the free, because every freed slave gave the crown a new partisan, and thus lessened those of a fierce, haughty, and dangerous nobility. It was the duty and the benevolent wish of the religious, and also their interest, to pursue the same policy, and, in the mean time, to mitigate the evils of thraldom. Thus the feelings, the interests, and the reason of all classes of the Anglo-

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Saxon society appeared in their witena-gemot; and whoever studies the successive provisions of their legislation which have come down to us, will perceive that the state of every class was progressively meliorated by new laws as new circumstances required them; and, even as far as we can discern their operation, almost every law seems to have been an improvement. Nothing more tended to insure this effect, than the right and practice of the subject to petition his legislature; for this, in practical tendency, makes every man, who has any grievance to complain of, a kind of party to its councils, as it enables him to lay his complaint before it, as completely as if he were a member of its body. Thus, as our present parliament, in its sovereign, its nobles, and its popular representatives, and in the petitions which it receives, concentres all the feelings and mind of the nation; so did the Anglo-Saxon witena-gemot: for there is good reason to believe, that the cities and burghs sent their members into its body; and if these were not at first commercial from the poverty and low estate of the earliest Anglo-Saxon tradesmen, they were likely to be of this description, when commerce had increased into the power of giving wealth, and that wealth, of creating for the merchant an effective rank not less important in the society whom he benefited, than the born nobility, which the great so highly valued. It is to the credit of the Anglo-Saxons, that no other European branch of the Teutonic population preserved so free and so effective a witena-gemot as they did. The legislatures which continued to exist of this sort in other countries gradually dwindled into non-existence, while the English parliament has flourished, like the English nation, an example and an instrument of a national prosperity and power, exceeded by no preceding state, and equalled, if at all, by very few. To Fra Paolo's exclamation, of "Esto perpetua," the tendencies of

the present age allow us to add the hope that, sooner or later, "Sit universa."

Where the cyning was only the temporary commander of the nation, for the purposes of war, whose function ceased when peace returned, the witena-gemot must have been the supreme authority of the nation. But when the cyning became an established and permanent dignity, whose privileges and power were perpetually increasing till he attained the majestic prerogatives and widely-diffused property which Athelstan and Edgar enjoyed, the witena-gemot then assumed a secondary rank in the state. We will endeavour to delineate its nature and powers with fidelity, adopting no theory, but carefully following the lights which the Saxon documents afford to us.

The topics of our inquiry will be these:

What its members were styled.
Of whom it was composed.
By whom convened.
The times of its meetings.
The place.
Its business.
Its power.

The gemot and its members have various appellations in the writings of our ancestors. In their vernacular tongue they have been styled, the witena-gemot; the Engla ræd gifan (council-givers); the witan; the Eadigra geheahtendlic ymcyme (the illustrious assembly of the wealthy); the Eadigan (the wealthy); the mycel synoth (great synod).[3]

In the Latin phrases applied to them by our forefathers they have been called optimates; principes; primates; proceres; concionatores Angliæ, and such like.[4]

[3] Sax. Chron. 154. MS. Claud. A. 3. Sax. Chron. 148. Alfred's Will. Wilkins, 76. 102. Ibid. p. 10. p. 72, &c.

[4] Ethelward, 847. Hem. Chart. p. 15. 17. 23. MS. Claud. MS. Cleop. 3 Gale, 484, 485, &c.

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The kings who allude to them in their grants, call them, My witan; meorum sapientum archontum; heroicorum virorum; conciliatorum meorum; meorum omnium episcoporum et principum optimatum meorum; optimatibus[5] nostris. All these are various phrases to express the same thing. With reference to their presumed wisdom, they were called witan; with reference to their rank and property, or nomination, they were styled eadigan, optimates, principes, proceres, &c. Other names will appear in some of the subsequent quotations.

On the question, who were the members of the witena-gemot, some certain information can be given, and some probable inferences may be made. That the bishops, abbots, eorles, ealdormen, and those who bore the title which was latinised into dux, princeps, &c., were parts of the great national council, is indisputable, from the language of the laws and the numerous charters which they signed. It is as manifest, that others besides these higher nobles also attended it; and that these were thegns, or ministri, milites, and several who are mentioned in the charters without any designation of legal rank. Thus far the Anglo-Saxon documents give certain information. The only questionable points are, whether these thegns, milites, and others, attended like our ancient and present barons, as a matter of personal right from their rank, when summoned by the king, and with a legal claim to be so summoned; or whether they were elected representatives of any and what part of the nation, inferior in rank to the summoned nobility. After many years' consideration of the question, I am inclined to believe, that the Anglo-Saxon witena-gemot very much resembled our present parliament, in the orders and persons that composed

[5] Heming. Chart. 2. 41. 57. MS. Claud. C. 9. 103. 112, 113, &c.

it; and that the members, who attended as representatives, were chosen by classes analogous to those who now possess the elective franchise.

We have an expressive outline of the general construction of all the German national councils, in these words of Tacitus: "On the minor affairs the chiefs consult; on the greater, ALL. Yet so, that those things, of which the decision rests with the people, are treated of among the chiefs." [6] This passage shows that, by the general principle of the most ancient German gemots, the people made an essential part of the assembly. Both chiefs and people deliberated, and the people decided. This being the primeval principle of the national councils of ancient Germany, before the Angles and Saxons left it, it becomes incumbent on the historical antiquary to show, not when the people acceded to the witena-gemots, but when, if ever, they were divested of the right of attending them. Of such a divestment there is no trace either in our historical or legal records.

The popular part of our representation seems to have been immemorial. There is no document that marks its commencement. And if the probabilities of the case had been duly considered, it would have been allowed to be unlikely, that the sovereigns and the aristocracy of the nation would have united to diminish their own legislative power, by calling representatives from the people to share it. Neither kings nor nobles could alone confer this power; and it would have been a voluntary and unparalleled abandonment of their own exclusive prerogatives and privileges, that they should have combined to impart it to others, if these had not possessed an ancient indefeasible right of enjoying it. But, in considering

[6] Tacitus Germ. s. 11.

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the Anglo-Saxon people that were represented at the gemot, we must not confound them with our present population. Those classes only who now elect members would then have been allowed to elect them; and the numbers of the individuals composing these classes were very much smaller indeed than their present amount. The great bulk of the Anglo-Saxon population was in a servile state, and therefore without any constitutional rights. All the villani, servi, bordarii, coscetæ, cotarii and coliberti, esnes and theows; that is, all the working agricultural population, and most of those who occupied the station of our present small farmers; and in the burghs and cities, all those who were what is called the men, or low vassals of other persons, analogous to our inferior artisans and mechanics and small tradesmen, were the property of their respective lords, and with no more political rights than the cattle and furniture, with which we find them repeatedly classed and transferred. Two thirds, at least, more probably three fourths, of the Anglo-Saxon population were originally in this state, till voluntary or purchased emancipations, and the effects of war and invasion, gradually increased the numbers of the free. Domesday-book shows, that even in the reign of the Confessor, the largest part of the English population was in the servile state.

The constitutional principle as to the servile population of the country seems to have been, that it was represented by its masters in the national council, like the rest of their property.

Hence it was only to the freemen of the counties, or, as we now call them, freeholders; and to the free inhabitants of the burghs or boroughs, and cities, whom we now call burgesses and citizens, that any legislative representation can have applied in the Anglo-Saxon times. The freeholders appear to have

multiplied from the Northmen invasions; for greater numbers of them are enumerated in Domesday book, in the counties which the Danish population principally colonised, than in the others.[7] These desolating wars destroyed so many nobles and their families, that many of the servile must have often become liberated from no lords or thegns surviving to claim them; and corresponding with this idea, there are many passages in our laws which are directed against those who wander over the country without having a visible owner. All such, as well as every fugitive who could escape pursuit, became in time freemen in the burghs or towns where they ultimately settled; yet these would not become electors in those places where none were allowed to be burgesses, who were not formally admitted to be such. They could only acquire a share in the elective franchise in those parts where mere house-holding was sufficient to constitute an elector; and as this large privilege was in after-times possessed in very few places, there is no reason to believe, that it was more extensively enjoyed in the Anglo-Saxon burghs.

If the freeholders of the Anglo-Saxon counties were not represented in their witena-gemot, at what other time did this most important privilege originate? That it should have begun after the Norman conquest is incredible. If the legislative council of the nation had been from immemorial custom confined to the king and nobles, their sturdy maintenance of all their exclusive rights and advantages is evidence that they would not have willingly curtailed their power by so great an innovation. The pride of nobility would not have admitted unnoble freeholders to have shared in the most honourable of its privileges; and least of all would the fierce and powerful Norman lords have

[7] See Domesday-book in Essex, Norfolk, &c.

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placed the Anglo-Saxon freemen, whom they had conquered, and with whom they were long in jealous enmity and proud hatred, in the possession of such a right. But the total absence of any document or date of the origin of the election of representatives by the freeholders of counties, is the strongest proof we can have that the custom has been immemorial, and long preceded the Norman conquest. The facts that such representatives have been always called knights of the shire, and that milites, or an order like those afterwards termed knights, were a part of the witena-gemot, befriend this deduction. Milites or knights were not the nobles of the country, though noblemen courted the military honour of the Anglo-Saxon knighthood. So many charters of the witena-gemots exist, signed by knights or milites, that either milites had a right as such to be a part of the council, or they were sent there as the representatives of their counties. The first supposition is supported by no law or practice, and is improbable from the number of milites in the country. The latter has been the ancient custom, without any known origin or limitary date.

To the citizens and burgesses of parliament analogous remarks are equally applicable. We may find no existing writ ordering their election earlier than the 23d year of Edward I.[8]; but the loss of the preceding records is no proof of their non-existence, and ought never to have been confounded with it. All the writs of summons of the Anglo-Saxon nobles to the witena-gemot have been lost; yet, who would infer from their non-appearance that the nobles were not summoned to the gemot, and had no right to be there. The earliest summons of the peers to parliament is usually, but erroneously, said to be that of the 49 Hen. III.; but is this a proof that they were not in parliament

[8] Brady gives this writ of summons, Hist. Treat. Boroughs, p. 54.

before ?[9] There is nothing in the earliest writ which has survived that marks such writ to have been the commencement of the custom. The truth seems to be, that this privilege has been, like the county representation, immemorial. Authentic history can assign to it no limit.

It is in this way that the privilege is mentioned by our most venerable writers. When our ancient Littleton mentions burghs, he describes them as the most ancient towns of England, and as possessed of this privilege of representation, without any remark that this great right was a novelty, or at that time of modern origin. His words are: "The ancient towns called burghs are the most ancient cities that are in England; for those towns that are called cities were burghs in ancient times, and were called burghs. For of such ancient cities, called burghs, come the burgesses to parliament, when the king has summoned his parliament." It appears to me that our venerable judge, when he wrote this passage, considered the custom of sending burgesses as ancient as the burghs themselves.[10]

The ancient words of the writ to the sheriffs, cited by Lord Coke, correspond with the preceding view of the subject. They do not order him to return burgesses from this or that particular burgh, to which the king or parliament had at some late period granted a right; but they direct him to send from every burgh in his county two burgesses[11]; *every* burgh, as if it had been the common public right of all burghs, and not a special privilege granted to any in

[9] The error on this subject shows the absurdity of dating the origin of any part of the parliamentary representation from the first writ that has happened to survive. Dugdale, and from him Hume, and a stream of writers on this subject, state the summons of the peers of the 49 Hen. III. as the most ancient that exists; and yet Selden had noticed one twenty-three years earlier. There is one to the archbishop of York, 26 Henry III. It is Dors. Claus. 26 Henry III. Mem. 13.

[10] Littleton, Ten. lib. ii. s. 164.

[11] Coke on Littl. p. 109.

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particular. The language of the oldest writ yet found, 23 Ed. I., is precisely the same.[12]

In the same manner our ancient lawyer Bracton speaks generally of the English laws, as having been made by the three estates of king, lords, and commons. It must be observed that he is not here speaking of new laws, but of the ancient law of the kingdom. "It will not be absurd to call the English laws by the name of laws, although not written, since whatever shall have been justly defined and approved by the council and consent of the magnates, and the common assent of the republic, the authority of the king or prince preceding has the vigour of law."[13] Here our unwritten common law is derived from the concurring authority of the king, the great, and the common assent of the republic. This third branch of authority is evidently that which arose from the popular representation.

Ina, in his introduction to his laws, mentions distinctly the three orders of the nation as assisting and concurring in their formation. —"My bishops and all my ealdormen, and the eldest *witan of my people*, and a great collection of God's servants."[14] Here the nobles, *the people*, and the clergy, are distinctly recognised.

That in addition to the clergy and greater nobles, there were other members of the witena-gemot; that thegns or ministri[15], and milites, or a rank in the community called afterwards knights, were among these other members; and that there were other persons there who were neither clergy, nobles, knights, thegns

[12] "De *qualibet* civitate ejusdem comitatus, duos cives et de quolibet burgo, duos burgenses." Brady, p. 54.

[13] Bracton, c. i. p. 1.

[14] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 14.

[15] The Saxon word used to express minister is thegn. In Henry the First's time thegn is mentioned as if analogous to baron. For a legal offence the fine of a comes was ten mancæ: thanii vel barones quinque. Wilk. Leg. 250.

nor ministri, and who being mentioned without designation in an age when all were so tenacious of their rank, may be reasonably considered to have been of an inferior order, are facts proved by the expressions used in many Anglo-Saxon charters, and by the signatures to them.

A charter of Ethelbald, in 736, is signed by the king, two bishops, two comites, a dux, an abbas, and by *six persons without any note of their quality.*[16]

A charter of Ethelred, expressed to be made "with the consent and licence of my optimates *and other fideles*," is signed by the king, two archbishops, six bishops, four duces, six abbots, ten ministri, and *by two without any title.*[17]

A charter of Ethelwulph is signed by the king, archbishop, two duces, and by twenty-three *without a title.* It is indorsed by two abbots, seven presbyters, six deacons, and *by three without a title.*[18]

A charter of Sigered, expressed to be made "with the advice and consent of my principes," is signed by the king, archbishop, two abbots, one presbyter, one comes, and *by four without a* title.[19]

A charter of Ceolwulf is signed by the king, archbishop, two bishops, a subregulus, ten duces, three abbots, two presbyters, and *by five without a title.*[20]

A charter of Offa is signed by the king, queen, one archbishop, three bishops, five abbots, two principes, one dux, one prefect, and *by eight without a title.*[21] Another of Offa's *has two without a title.*[22]

A charter of Cenwulf, made "with the advice and consent of my optimates," is signed by king, queen, archbishop, four bishops, five duces, and *by one without a title.*[23]

A charter of Berthtwulf, mentioned to be made before the king and proceres, and that the optimates adjudged, and that the king before his archontes did it, is signed by the king, queen, four bishops, one abbot, eight duces, and *by six without a title.*[24]

A charter of Edward, the son of Alfred, made "with the testimony of the bishops, and princes, and *some senators subject to them*," is signed by the king, the ruler of Mercia and his lady, three bishops, two duces, two ministri, and by *one without a title.*[25]

A charter of Burghred, made "with the advice and licence of all my proceres," is signed by the king, queen, four bishops, ten duces, and *by ten without a title.*[26]

[16] MSS. Cott. Aug. A. 2.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Dugdale, Mon. Ang. p. 29.
[20] MSS. Aug. A. 2.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Heming. Chart. p. 18.
[23] Ibid. p. 23.
[24] Ibid. p. 28. Another of Berthtwulf is signed by seven without a title, p. 224.
[25] Ibid. p. 65.
[26] Ibid. p. 87.

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A charter of Edward, in 908, is signed by the king, archbishop, four bishops, king's brother and two sons, five duces, four presbyters, eighteen ministri, and *by three without a title.*[27]

A charter of Edward the Confessor to the Abbey of Westminster, is signed by the king, queen, two archbishops, eight bishops, seven abbots, the chancellor, four duces, six ministri, and *by four without a title.*[28]

A charter of Edgar is signed by the king, two archbishops, three bishops, three abbots, four duces, four ministri, and *by fifteen others without a title.*[29]

A charter of Cnut is signed by the king, queen, two archbishops, six bishops, seven duces, seven milites, seven abbots, and *by five without a title*[30]; and this is expressed to be made with the advice and decree of the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, and *of my other fidelium.*[31]

A charter of Edgar in 973, besides the king, two archbishops, three bishops, three abbots, four duces, and four discthegns, *has twenty-one without* a title among the according persons.[32]

In a charter of Edward the Confessor, the consenting persons are the king, two archbishops, three bishops, the chancellor, a notary, five abbots, four duces, a chamberlain, a stallere, *and two without a title.*[33]

From these instances it is manifest that there were members of the witena-gemot who were distinguished by no rank or title of honour, like the duces, earls, thegns, or ministri, and milites, and who had no other dignity than that of being part of the gemot, and therefore signed the charters without any designation of peculiar quality. These untitled persons suit the situation of those who were sent by the cities and burghs. Such would be but plain citizens and burgesses, who had no rank in the state by which they could be designated.

That thegns, or ministri, and milites, were always members of the witena-gemot, will be sufficiently

[27] Dugd. Mon. p. 37. [28] Ibid. p. 62. [29] Ibid. p. 66.
[30] MSS. Aug. A. 2. [31] Dugd. Mon. p. 288.
[32] Ibid. p. 244. "His testibus *concordantibus.*"
[33] Ibid. p. 238. In a charter granted by Wihtred, it is stated that it was confirmed in 716, in the synod held at Cloveshoe, by the authority of those whose names follow. It is signed by the archbishop, thirteen bishops, ten presbyters, one deacon, two abbots, two prepositi, one earl, and twenty others who have no titles. Astle's Charters, MSS. No. 2. In 1018 is a charter of Cnut signed by prelates and duces, and also by a prepositus, two ministri, and by four others with no quality annexed. Ast. Ch. MSS. No. 31.

manifested by the following instances, as well as by some of those already adduced. It will be hereafter shown, in considering the dignity of thegns, or thanes, that the superior thegns, also called king's thegns, had under them inferior thegns, who were named medeme or middling thegns. As Domesday-book mentions thanes holding land, with their milites under them, who were also landed proprietors, we may presume that the Saxon term of the middling thanes was first used to mark those who are in Domesday called their milites, especially as Alfred translated the milites of Bede by the word thegn. But the term cniht was also coming into use before the Conquest for the same class; and afterwards the word knights was their established English denomination, as milites was the Latin one. That the Saxons had a dignity and class of persons analogous to the Norman knight has been already proved: one authority will be hereafter noticed which applies the word drenc to this celebrated class of our population.

It has been already intimated that Saxon superior thegns were classed as the Norman barons, and it is probable that the secondary or middling thegns were similar to the Norman knights. But although milites were in the Anglo-Saxon witena-gemot, as well as thegns, yet, as all the milites, or secondary thegns, were too numerous to be there, the inference seems indisputable, that those who were present did not come from any personal right of being members, but were sent as the elected representatives of others, either of their own class, or of all the freeholders in the county whom they preceded in rank.

The following examples will add more information on these subjects: —

A charter of Ceolulf, in 803, is signed by the king, archbishop, two bishops, three duces, one presbyter, and *by thirteen milites.*[34]

[34] MSS. Aug. A. 2.

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One of Ethelstan has the names of the king, archbishop, eight bishops, four duces, and *twenty marked mis and mi*, which may either mean miles or minister.[35]

One of Cnut stated to be "with these witnesses consenting," and "under the testimony of the optimates," is signed by the king, queen, two archbishops, nine bishops, four duces, eight abbots, *and four milites.*[36]

One of Ethelstan has the king, archbishop, five bishops, three duces, and seven ministri.[37]

Eadwig's charters exhibit to us, in one, the king, his brother, archbishop, two bishops, five duces, and eight ministri; in the other, besides the clergy, six duces and six persons marked m̃.[38]

Besides one of Edgar's signed *by sixteen* m̃, and another *by twenty-six mis*[39], there is another, expressed to be "confirmed at London by the *common* council of his optimates," which is signed *by four ministri.*[40]

In 958, a charter of Edgar's, made "with the advice of my optimates," adds "these witnesses consenting, whose names follow *according to the dignity of each.*" The names are, the king's two archbishops, six bishops, the king's avia, a former queen, three abbots, seven duces, and *sixty ministri.*[41]

A charter of Wulfere, in 664, made "with the accompanying kings, fathers, and duces, is signed by the king, by three other kings of the octarchy, his brother, and two sisters, archbishop, four bishops, two presbyters, one abbot, three principes, *and five ministri;*" and it is added, "*by the rest of the optimates and ministri of the king.*"[42]

Edmund's charter, in 942, is signed by eleven milites[43]; another in 941, by fourteen ministri.[44] So one of Edred's has nine ministri[45]; another, marked as with the consent "heroicorum virorum," has also nine ministri.[46] One of Ethelstan's is signed by eleven ministri.[47] One of Cnut, "with the advice of twenty ministri, among others."[48]

Of Ethelred's charters, one contains fifteen ministri among the concurring persons[49]; another is made with the advice of forty-three ministri, among others[50]; another, in 1006, among the "sapientes," or *wise men, places twenty-one ministri*[51]; and also ten ministri in 1001.[52]

On so important a subject it may be proper to adduce a few more examples: —

[35] MSS. Aug. A. 2. [36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid. [38] Ibid. [39] Ibid.
[40] Dug. Mon. 17. One of the persons, among the kings that sign, is Mascusius Archipirata. This was a sea-king. Another has twelve ministri, p. 141.
[41] Dug. Mon. p 103.
[42] Ibid. p. 66. [43] Ibid. 287.
[44] Ibid. 214. So another in 940, has twenty-three ministri. Aug. A. 2.
[45] Aug. A. 2. [46] Dugd. Mon. 215.
[47] Hem. Chart. p. 12.
[48] Dugd. 276. Another of his is signed by twenty-six ministri. Ibid. p. 229.
[49] Dugd. 258. [50] Ibid. 261. [51] Ibid. 270.
[52] Ibid. 217. So fifteen ministri sign another, p. 218.

A charter of Edgar, in 970, gives strong evidence on this subject: it is signed by the king, two archbishops, eleven bishops, the queen, eleven abbots, nine duces, and twenty-six milites, or knights; and there are added these words, "With many others of all the dignities and primates of my kingdom."[53]

It is obvious from this document that the witena-gemot consisted not only of the prelates, abbots, and nobles, but of knights and many others, who are called dignitates et primates.[54]

Another charter of Edgar is signed by the king, one archbishop, twelve bishops, twelve abbots, six duces, and twenty-eight milites, or knights.[55]

One of Cnut is signed by the king, queen, two archbishops, eleven bishops, eight abbots, three earls, five milites, and five others called satraps.

That this was part of the witena-gemot is manifest, because one of the Comites expresses, in addition to his signature, that it was the decretum sapientum, the decree of the wise men.[56]

The Saxon Chronicle obviously alludes to the members and assembly of the witena-gemot when it mentions that William the Conqueror wore his crown every year, in Easter, at Winchester; on Whitsuntide, at Westminster; and in mid-winter at Gloucester; and then were with him all the nice men over all England; archbishops, bishops, abbots, and earls, thegns, and cnihtas.[57] It is not at all probable that thegns and knights would have been part of the Conqueror's parliament if they had not been constituent parts of the national council before his invasion.

That the thegn, or minister, was also sometimes a miles, I infer from observing that one of Edgar's charters is signed by eight with the designation of miles, some of whose names I recognise in other charters of the same king, where they are denoted as

[53] Compare the charters in Dugdale, p. 211., with those in pp. 141. and 103.
[54] Gale's Script. vol. iii. p. 517.
[55] Ibid. p. 520.
[56] Ibid. p. 523.
[57] Sax. Chron. p. 190.

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ministri.[58] That thegn is sometimes translated minister, many charters and Saxon documents show[59]; but there is one that has come down to us which actually distinguishes the ministri from the nobiles; it is signed by the king, the archbishop, four bishops, six duces, one abbot, *three nobiles*, and *nine ministri*.[60]

That the witena-gemot contained some who had lands, and some who had none, and therefore did not sit in that assembly by virtue of their baronies, or landed property, may be justly inferred from an important charter of Kenulf, king of Mercia, in the year 811:—

It states that the king called to the consecration of the church, "the whole of the optimates of Mercia; the bishops, princes, earls, *procuratores*, and my relations, the kings of Kent and Essex, with all who were present, witnesses, in our synodical councils." The king adds, "With all the optimates of Mercia IN THREE SYNODS, with unanimous advice, I gladly gave my gifts to all the archontes of Mercia, and of the other provinces, in gold, in silver, and in all my utensils, and in chosen steeds; that is, to each according to the dignity of his degree; *and on all who had not lands* I bestowed a pound in the purest silver, and in the purest gold; and to every presbyter one marc; and to every servant of God one shilling; and these gifts are not to be numbered, as it became our royal dignity."[61]

This important charter not only proves that some of the members of the witena-gemot had no lands, but it seems to intimate that they met in three chambers. The expression "in three synods,"

[58] Compare the charters in Dugdale Mon. p. 211. with those in pp. 141. and 103.

[59] And so Alfred translates the Latin of Bede.

[60] Dugd. Mon. 230.

[61] Ibid. 189. It is signed by only the king, the two other kings, archbishop, twelve bishops, and eleven duces, which shows that only a part of the witena-gemot signed this charter. Some of the Saxon charters have been supposed to be forged just after the Conquest. The observation has been made much too indiscriminately. But though the monks may have sometimes pretended to more grants of land, and of exemptions than they were entitled to, their own interest would lead them to be correct in their forms and phrases of the documents they adduced. In the above citations I have endeavoured to avoid all that seemed doubtful, but we cannot believe that the monks would expose themselves to immediate detection by introducing into the witena-gemot those classes who were never there. Therefore, even surreptitious charters would throw light on this subject. — *Procuratores*, or attorneys, imply representation.

coupled with "the unanimous advice," leads the mind to ask whether it does not refer to the three orders of clergy, nobles, and commons meeting in separate synods, rather than to three successive meetings of the same synod. The practice from the time that the meetings of parliament become distinctly visible to us has been such separate meetings, with the custom of all uniting together when the king was present. The natural force of the words "three synods" is to express three distinct councils, not three sittings of the same council.

There is a charter, dated 970, in Ingulf, which besides the clergy, duces, and ministers, has fourteen signatures without any designation.[62]

In one a person signs himself as both sacerdos and minister, as if the minister was a qualification distinct from, and additional to, that of priest.

In 833, the king says he makes his charter before the bishops, and greater proceres of all England, as if the proceres had been in two divisions—the majores and the minores.[63]

The same distinction is expressly mentioned in 851. The optimates of the universi concilii, of the *whole* council, are noticed; and Ingulf says, "In this council, many, tam majores quam minores, became afflicted with an epidemical disease."[64]

This distinction of the greater from the less barons, or proceres, in the Anglo-Saxon times, shows that there were two classes of them in the national council before the Conquest. That the majores, or greater barons, answered to our present House of Peers, and were, like them, called individually to parliament by the king's writ of summons, and that the others were to be sent like our Commons, we may safely infer from the provisions of Magna Charta: "We will cause to

[62] Ingulf, Hist. p. 117.

[63] Ibid. p. 10.

[64] Ibid. p. 16. In the same sense Eadmer mentions "totam regni nobilitatem, *populumque minorem*." P. 58.

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be summoned the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, and greater barons, majores barones, separately, by our letters: and besides, we will cause to be summoned, in general, by our sheriffs and bailiffs, all those who hold of us in capite at a certain day, at the end of forty days at least, at a certain place," &c.[65] The provisions of Magna Charta were not claimed as innovations, but as the ancient rights and privileges of the nation.

The same distinction of the inferior barons from the superior chamber of them, is expressively mentioned in the life of Becket, by his contemporary secretary.

After stating that the king appointed a general council, or parliament, to meet at Northampton, he says, "On the second day the bishops, earls, and *all* the barons were sitting."[66] In the discussion the bishops said, "We sit here not as bishops, but as barons: you are barons and we are barons, your[67] peers." He afterwards adds, "The king exacted from the earls and barons their judgment of the archbishop." Then follows this important passage: "Some sheriffs and barons of the second dignity are called in, ancient in days, that they may be added to them, and be present at the judgment."[68]

These last quotations prove that there were barons of the second dignity distinct from the greater, not only in the time of John but also of Henry the Second; and by comparing them with the expressions of Ingulf, it is obvious that the same distinction prevailed in the Saxon times. The passage from Stephanides also implies that, until called in, the minor barons were not sitting with the peers.

The expressions of the writers immediately after the Conquest, in describing the national council, show

[65] Statutes of the Realm, p. 10.
[66] W. Stephan. p. 35.
[67] Ibid. p. 37.
[68] Ibid. p. 46.

that it consisted of other classes besides the nobles and clergy, because it is not likely that the first three Norman sovereigns would have introduced, as there is no evidence that they did introduce, a more popular representation. Thus of Henry the First it is said, by Peter of Blois, "Having appointed a most distinguished council at London, as well of the bishops and abbots of all the clergy of England, as of the earls, barons, *optimates and proceres* of all his kingdom."[69] The optimates and proceres express members different from the earls, and barons, and additional to them.

So the Saxon Chronicle mentions of the same king, Henry the First, that he "sent his writs over all England, and commanded his bishops and his abbots, and *all his thegns*, that they should come to his witenagemot at Candlemas day at Gloucester: and they did so: and the king bade them choose an archbishop. The bishops chose one, but it is added, that the monks, the eorles, *and the thegnas*, opposed him."[70] So it is mentioned four years afterwards, that Henry held all his "hired," meaning his council, at Windsor, at Christmas; and that all the head men, lay and clergy, that were in England, were there; and it adds, that the archbishop, bishops, and abbots, and the earls, and *all the thegns*, that were there, swore fidelity to his daughter.[71] These passages concur with the preceding to show that the witena-gemot here contained other members, called thegns, in addition to the earls and clergy.

Recollecting preceding facts, and the immemorial custom of the united assent of King, Lords, and Commons, being given to all our statute-laws, with-

[69] Pet. Bless. Hist. p. 128.

[70] Sax. Chron. 224, 225. That thanes or thegns made part of the witena-gemot is expressly declared by Edgar; for he says, "I and my thegnas will," &c. Wilk. p. 80.

[71] Sax. Chron. p. 230.

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out any record of the commencement of their concurrence, the following passages of the unanimous consent of the whole council in the Anglo-Saxon times, and of their being the council of the *whole* nation, seem very much to imply an unanimity of more bodies or classes than one single assembly of assenting nobles:—

"With the unanimous consent of the whole of the present council."[72]

"With the common gratuitous council and consent of all the magnates of the kingdom."[73]

"When (948) the *universal* magnates of the kingdom, summoned by the royal edict, as well the archbishop, bishops, and abbots, as the other *proceres* and *optimates* of the *whole* kingdom, had met together at London, to treat of the public affairs of the whole kingdom."[74]

"947. Who at London in a *common* council before the archbishop, bishops, and the magnates of the whole[75] land."

So Egbert says,—

"With the licence and consent of the *whole of our nation*, and with the unanimity of all the optimates."[76]

So a charter of Ethelred mentions, emphatically, "with the unanimous legal council, and most equal judgment, of the bishops, duces, and all the optimates of this kingdom." And a charter of Burhred, in 864, is made "with the consent and licence of all our senate of bishops, princes, and of *all* our optimates *together*." Another document says, "with the testimony of the bishops and princes, and of some *senators subject to them*."[77] All these expressions seem not to suit an assembly that consisted merely of nobles and clergy.

Hence, when we read that William the Conqueror adds, "By the *common council* of *all* our kingdom[78]," and that his son Henry the First uses the words "By the common council of the barons[79]," we appear not to

[72] Ingulf. p. 15.
[73] Ibid. p. 13.
[74] Ibid. p. 32.
[75] Ibid. p. 39.
[76] MSS. Claud. C. 9.
[77] MSS. Claud. and Hem. Chart. 63. 65.
[78] Wilk. Concil. p. 228.
[79] Ibid. 233. So John says in the articles preceding Magna Charta, that no scutage or aid shall be imposed on the kingdom except by the "commune consilium."

err when we infer that the words common council express an united council of more classes and bodies than one. It is thus the terms have been immemorially used in the city of London. Its lord mayor, aldermen, and the elected deputies of its wards, form, when all assemble, its common council; yet the aldermen have a separate court, with separate powers and privileges, and at times, like the mayor, act distinctly and apart. There is every reason to suppose that this civic constitution of the metropolis originated in the Anglo-Saxon times.

But this meaning of the terms "common council" is not left merely to our conjecture, it is the actual meaning given to the words by the most ancient writ of electing citizens and burgesses to parliament that has survived to us. It occurs among the Rolls of the 23d Edward the First.—

"We command and firmly enjoin you, that of the aforesaid county you cause to be elected, without delay, two knights, and from every city of the same county two citizens, and from every burgh two burgesses, of the more discreet and able to labour, and cause them to come to us at the aforesaid day and place; so that the said knights may have then there full and sufficient power for themselves, and for the community of the aforesaid county; and the said citizens and burgesses for themselves, and for the community of the aforesaid cities and burghs, distinct from them, to do there what shall be ordained from the common council (de communi consilio) in the premises."[80]

Here the words common council are applied to express the deliberate determinations of the whole body of the parliament in its three estates of king, lords, and commons.

If only the nobles and clergy, as nobles or barons, had formed the witena-gemot, there seems to be no reason why so many and such various phrases should have been used in the Anglo-Saxon documents to express its members. If they had been of one class only,

[80] Claus. 23 Ed. I. M. 4. apud Brady, p. 54.

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one uniform and simple denomination would have been more natural; but if the witena-gemot was a complex body, and, besides the nobles, comprised knights of the shires, citizens, and burgesses, as all our parliaments since the Conquest seem to have done, then we perceive the cause of their appellations being multiplied.

The force of all the preceding circumstances, considered without reference to any theory, and taken together, seems to me to suit better the constitution of our present parliament than any senate composed merely of nobility and clergy. Although we have no direct evidence from records that the cities and burghs were represented in the witena-gemot, yet there seems to be sufficient probabilities of evidence that the fact was so. The claim of the borough of Barnstaple, in Devonshire, must have considerable weight on our judgments when we reflect on this subject. In a petition to parliament, presented in the reign of Edward the Third, this borough claimed to have been chartered by Athelstan, with several privileges, and to have sent, from time immemorial, burgesses to parliament. Its claims were investigated by jurors legally appointed, and though from the loss of the charter the other immunities were not confirmed, its right of sending burgesses was admitted to continue.[81] In Edward the Second's reign the borough of St. Alban's stated, in a petition to parliament, that they, *as the other* burgesses of the kingdom, ought to come, by two common burgesses, to the parliament of the kingdom when that should happen to be summoned, as they have been accustomed to come *in all past times;* but that the sheriff, to favour the abbot, had refused to return them. The answer to this petition was not a denial of the right, but a reference to the

[81] Lord Lyttelton remarked this important document in his History of Henry II. vol. iii. p. 413.

Chancery, to see if *they* had been accustomed to come.[82] The right here claimed is not rested on any particular charter, but on the ancient usage of the country.

In the 51st Edward the Third, the Commons stated that, "of *the common right of the kingdom*, two persons are and will be chosen to be in parliament for the community of the said counties, except the prelates, dukes, earls, and barons, and such as hold by barony; and besides cities and burghs, which ought to choose of themselves such as should answer for them.[83] Here also the privilege of parliamentary representation is not rested on any dated law or royal charter, but *on the common right of the kingdom.*

There is a passage in the laws of Ethelstan that seems to me to relate to the witena-gemot, and to the representatives of burghs. If it has this reference, it shows the punishment that was provided for those who, when chosen for the burghs, neglected to attend the gemot. —

"If any one shall forsake the gemot three times he shall pay a fine to the king for his contumacy, and shall be summoned seven nights before the gemot meets. If he will not then act rightly, (that is, attend,) nor pay for his contumacy, then all the yldestan men that belong to that burgh shall ride and take away all that he possesses, and set him to bail."[84]

The expence, trouble, suspension of business, and occasional danger, which the burgesses, especially the more distant, would often experience from the perils of travelling, and the violence of the great, in attending the witena-gemot, must have made many persons backward in frequenting it, especially when they had been chosen without desiring the distinction. This law seems directed to counteract this disposition.

[82] Plac. Parliam. vol. i. p. 327.
[83] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 368.
[84] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 60.

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That it was no common gemot appears from the next provision of the same law, which supposes a reluctance in the yldestan man to inflict the punishment enjoined, and therefore imposes a fine on every one that would not ride with his companions to execute the law. It proceeds to forbid all revenge for the punishment, and directs the same loss of property on the avenger as had been attached to the person that would not attend the gemot. I cannot think that the severity of this law was wanted for enforcing attendance on a mere folc, or shire gemot, for which there were so many inducements from its vicinity and popularity. Hence I think it relates to the great national council, to which only the word gemot, by itself, properly applies. The word gemot is frequently thus used to express the witena-gemot.[85]

That every freeman had his definite rights, and every land its definite burdens and services, known and established by law and custom, is apparent from numerous Anglo-Saxon documents which have survived to us, and is fully shown by Domesday-book, in which the commissioners appointed by the Conqueror made a specific return of the gelding lands and burghs of the country, and stated the individual payments and share of military burdens to which each was subject, and which only could be claimed from him according to law and ancient custom. The act of the national legislature, to which, by his representatives, he assented, could alone subject him to further burdens. These definite, individual rights favour the supposition that the witena-gemot, in order to affect the property and exemptions of the free class of the people, must have consisted of more orders than that of the nobility and clergy; and the probabilities, on the whole, seem to be that the witena-gemot very much resembled our present parliaments.

[85] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 62. 69. 116. 146, &c.

Dr. Brady's assertion, in his treatise on Boroughs, that "there were no citizens, burgesses, or tenants of the king's demesnes summoned to great councils or parliaments until the 23d of Edward the First[86]," is not supported by the authorities which he adduces, but rests on his mistaken supposition that the first writ, now existing, of that year, in which the sheriff was directed to proceed to the election of citizens and burgesses[87], was the first time that they were elected at all, although there is nothing in that writ which marks it to have been the commencement of an innovation so momentous, and although one of the next documents which he produces shows that the government attempted to get money from the burghs without calling their representatives into parliament.[88] The true inference from all his documents is, that the writs for the election of burgesses now existing are but the copies of more ancient forms, and the repetition of a prescriptive custom which has no known commencement.

That they were not regularly summoned will appear probable when the frequent violences of power, and all the irregularities of those disturbed times, are duly considered.

That kings may have sometimes been content with the money they obtained from the barons and the counties, or may have sometimes procured it, by persuasion or threats, from the burghs separately, as Edward the First attempted in the instance alluded to, are also credible facts; but the fact that he was obliged to solicit the grant from the burghs, is evidence that he had not the legal power of raising it without

[86] Brady on Bor. p. 68. [87] He gives it in his book, p. 54.

[88] Brady on Bor. p. 66. One writ mentions that the mayor, sheriffs, aldermen, and all the communities of the city, had granted him a sixth of their movables, and the other, reciting this as an example, directs the commissioners to ask (ad petendum) this of the demesne cities in the four counties mentioned, and to go with the sheriffs to them to require and efficaciously *induce* them to make a similar grant. P. 67.

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their consent; and their right to give this consent is evidence of the existence of their constitutional privilege of not being taxed without their own consent; and this truth confirms all the reasoning which makes it probable that their representatives were called to the Saxon witena-gemot when it was intended that the burghs should contribute to the taxation. It does not at all shake this general principle that some new burghs attained the privilege within the period of historical record.[89]

We know what was necessary to exalt a ceorl to a thegn, but we cannot distinctly ascertain all the qualifications which entitled persons to a seat in the witena-gemot. There is, however, one curious passage which ascertains that a certain amount of property was an indispensable requisite, and that acquired property would answer this purpose as well as hereditary property. The possession here stated to be necessary was forty hides of land. The whole incident is so curious as to be worth transcribing.—Guddmund desired in matrimony the daughter of a great man, but because he had not the lordship of forty hides of land he could not, though noble, be reckoned among the proceres; and therefore she refused him. He went to his brother, the abbot of Ely, complaining of his misfortune. The abbot fraudulently gave him possessions of the monastery sufficient to make up the deficiency. This circumstance attests that nobility alone was not sufficient for a seat among the witan, and that forty hides of land was an indispensable qualification.[90]

[89] The ancient charters of London, or copies of them recited in authentic charters, exist from the time of Henry the First, but none contain the grant of its right of sending representatives. The just inference seems to be that this constitutional right had been established long before. There is no charter existing, and none have been known to exist, that confers the right on any of the ancient burghs. This appears to me to show that it was the ancient immemorial right of all burghs or cities, beginning with their existence, and constitutionally attached to it, and not flowing from any specific grant.

[90] 3 Gale's Script. p. 513.

I cannot avoid mentioning one person's designation, which seems to have the force of expressing an *elected* member. Among the persons signing to the act of the gemot at Cloveshoe, in 824, is, "Ego Beonna *electus* consent. et subscrib."[91]

[91] Astle's MS. Charters, No 12. In the Registrum Wiltunense, a charter in 948 is signed, after the clergy, by four duces and nine milites: one in 940, and another in 960, by five duces and eleven milites: two in 903 and 957 have, each, the signature of Athelstan Mess'. One in 943 has seven duces and fourteen milites. One of Alfred's, in 892, besides his son, a bishop, two priests, and two duces, is subscribed by Deormod Cell' Ælfric Thess' and Sigewulf, Hinc'. Edred's in 946 exhibits eight duces and twelve milites; and the grant of Ethelred in 994 is signed by the archbishop, eleven bishops, seven abbots, seven duces, and twenty *ministri*, whose appellation seems to have been substituted for that of milites in the others.

## CHAP. V.

*Witena-Gemot. — How convened. — Times and Places of Meeting. — Its Business and Power.*

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THEY were convened by the king's writ. Several passages in the writers of this period mention that they assembled at the summons of the king. "On a paschal solemnity all the greater men, the clergy, and the laity of all the land, met at the king's court, to celebrate the festival *called by him*."[1] In 1048, the Saxon Chronicle says, "the king *sent* after all his witan, and bade them come to Gloucester a little after the feast of Saint Mary."[2] In one MS. in the year 993, the king says, "I ordered a synodale council to be held at Winton on the day of Pentecost."[3]

The times of their meeting seem to have been usually the great festivals of the church, as Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide; and of these, if we may judge by its being more frequently mentioned, Easter was the favourite period. But their meetings were not confined to these seasons; for we find that they sometimes took place in the middle of Lent[4], near the feast of Saint Mary[5], July[6], September, and October.[7] One ancient law-book, the Mirror, mentions "that Alfred caused the earls to meet for the state of the kingdom, and ordained, for a perpetual usage, that twice in the year, or oftener, if need were, during peace, they should assemble together at London to speak their minds for the guiding of the people; how

[1] 3 Gale's Script. 395.
[2] Sax. Chron. p. 163.
[3] MS. Claud. c. 9. p. 122.
[4] Sax. Chron. 161.
[5] Ibid. 163.
[6] Astle's MS. Chart. No. 2.
[7] Sax. Chron. 164. Heming. Chart. 50.

to keep from offences; live in quiet, and have right done them by ascertained usages and sound judgment."[8] We may add, that annual and more frequent meetings are often mentioned, but never annual elections.

The place of their assembly was not fixed. After Egbert's accession, the gemot was convened at London, at Kingston, at Wilton, Winton, Cloveshoe, Dorchester, Cyrenceaster, Calne, Ambresbury, Oxford, Gloucester, Ethelwaraburh, Kyrtlenegum, and other places.[9] Perhaps the place of their meeting depended on the king's residence at the time, and was fixed by his convenience.

Our monarchs seem to have maintained their influence in the witena-gemots by their munificence. One account of their meeting in the time of Edgar is thus given: "All England rejoicing in the placid leisure of tranquil peace, it happened that on a certain paschal solemnity all the majores of all the country, as well clergy as laymen, of both orders and professions, met at the royal court called by him to celebrate the festivity, and to be honoured by him with royal gifts. Having celebrated the divine mysteries with all alacrity and joy, all went to the palace to refresh their bodies. Some days having been passed away, the king's hall resounded with acclamations. The streets murmured with the busy hum of men. None felt entirely a refusal of the royal munificence; for all were magnificently rewarded with presents of various sort and value, in vessels, vestments, or the best horses.[10]

The king presided at the witena-gemots, and sometimes, perhaps always, addressed them. In 993 we

[8] Mirror, c. 1. s. 2.

[9] Sax. Chron. 142. 161. 168. 124. 128. 163. 146. Heming. 93. MS. Cott. Aug. 2. 20. Astle's MS. Chart. No 8. No. 12. MS. Cleop. B. 13. MS. Claud. c. 9. 121.

[10] 3 Gale's Script. p. 395.

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have this account of a royal speech. The king says, in a charter which recites what had passed at one of their meetings, "I benignantly addressed to them salutary and pacific words. I admonished all—that those things which were worthy of the Creator, and serviceable to the health of my soul, or to my royal dignity, and which ought to prevail as proper for the English people, they might, with the Lord's assistance, discuss in common."[11] The speech of Edgar, in favour of the monks, is stated at length in one of our old Chroniclers.[12]

It has been already mentioned, that one of their duties was to elect the sovereign, and to assist at his coronation. Another was to co-operate with the king in making laws. Thus Bede says, of the earliest laws we have, that Ethelbert established them "with the counsel of his wise men."[13] The introductory passages of the Anglo-Saxon laws which exist, usually express that they were made with the concurrence of the witan.

The witena-gemot appears also to have made treaties jointly with the king; for the treaty with Guthrun and the Danes thus begins: "This is the treaty which Ælfred, king, and Gythrun, king, and all the witan of England, and all the people in East Anglia, (that is, the Danes,) have made and fastened with oath."[14] In 1011, it is said, that the king and his witan sent to the Danes and desired peace, and promised tribute and supply.[15] On another occasion, the Saxon Chronicle states, that the king sent to the hostile fleet an ealdorman, who, with the word of the king, and his witan, made peace with them.[16] In 1016, it expresses that Eadric, the ealdorman, and the witan who were there, counselled, that the kings

[11] MS. Claud. c. 9. p. 122.
[12] Eth. Abb. Ailr.
[13] Bede, lib. ii. c. 5.
[14] Wilk. Leg. Angl. 47.
[15] Sax. Chron. 140.
[16] Ibid. 132.

(Edmund and Canute) should make peace between them.[17] In 1002, the king ordered, and his witan, the money to be paid to the Danes, and peace to be made.[18] The treaty printed in Wilkin's Leges Anglo-Saxonicæ, p. 104, is said to have been made by the king and his witan.

They are also mentioned to us as assisting the king in directing the military preparations of the kingdom. Thus in 992, the Saxon Chronicle says, that "the king ordered, and all his witan, that man should gather together all the ships that were to go to London."[19] In 999, the king, with his witan, ordered that both the ship fyrde and the land fyrde should be led against the Danes.[20] So, in 1052, the king decreed, and his witan, that man should proceed with the ships to Sandwich; and they set Raulf, eorl, and Oddan, eorl, to heafod-mannum (to be the head-men) thereto.[21]

Impeachments of great men were made before the witena-gemot. Some instances may be concisely narrated. In 1048, the king, conceiving that he had cause of complaint against the family of the famous Godwin, convened the witena-gemot. The family armed. The witan ordered that both sides should desist from hostilities, and that the king should give God's peace and his full friendship to both sides. Then the king and his witan directed another witena-gemot to be assembled at London on the next harvest equinox, and the king ordered the army on the south and north of the Thames to be bannan.

At this gemot, eorl Swain, one of Godwin's sons, was declared an utlah (outlaw); and Godwin and his other son, Harold, were cited to attend the gemot as speedily as possible. They approached, and desired peace and hostages, that they might come into the gemot and quit it without treachery. They were again

[17] Sax. Chron. 150. [18] Ibid. 132. [19] Ibid. 126.
[20] Ibid. 130. [21] Ibid. 165.

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cited, and they repeated their demand. Hostages were refused them, and five days of safety only were allowed them to leave the country. They obeyed, and went exiles into Flanders.[22]

We have another instance of the great council both banishing and pardoning. A great gemot in 1052, was assembled at London, which "all the eorls and the best men in the country" attended. There Godwin made his defence, and purged himself before his lord the king and all the people, that he was guiltless of the crime charged on him and his sons. The king forgave him and his family, and restored them their possessions and the earldom. But the archbishop and all the Frenchmen were banished.[23]

The same power was exerted in 1055. A witena-gemot was assembled seven days before Mid-Lent, and eorl Elfgar was outlawed for high treason, or, as it is expressed, because he was a swica, a betrayer of the king and all his people. His earldom was given to another.[24]

So all the optimates meeting at Cyrenceaster, in the reign of Ethelred, banished Elfric for high treason, and confiscated all his possessions to the king.[25]

At a great council, held in 716, one of their main objects is expressed to have been to examine anxiously into the state of the churches and monasteries in Kent, and their possessions.[26]

At these councils, grants of land were made and confirmed. The instances of this are innumerable. Thus, in 811, Cenwulf, at a very great council convened in London, gave some lands of his own right, with the advice and consent of the said council.[27] It

[22] Sax. Chron. 164. [23] Ibid. 168. [24] Ibid. 169.
[25] MS. Claud. c. 9. 123, 124. [26] Astle's MS. Chart. No. 2.
[27] Ibid. No. 8. But it would seem that even the kings could not grant lands without the consent of the witena-gemot, for a gift of land by a king is mentioned: "Sed, quia non fuit de consensu magnatum regni, donum id non potuit valere." 1 Dug. Mon. 20.

would be tedious to enumerate all the grants which we know of, where the consent of the council is stated. Many have been already alluded to.

At the council in 716, they forbad any layman taking any thing from the monastery therein named; and they freed the lands belonging to it from various impositions and payments.[28]

At the council in 824, they inquired into the necessities of the secular deputies, as well as into the monastical disciplines, and into the ecclesiastical morals. Here a complaint was made by the archbishop, that he had been unjustly deprived of some land. He cited those who withheld it. The writings concerning the land were produced, and *viva voce* evidence heard. The writings and the land were ordered by the council to be given to the archbishop.[29]

At a council in 903, an ealdorman stated that his title-deeds had been destroyed by fire. He applied to the council for leave to have new ones. New ones were ordered to be made out to him, as nearly similar to the former as memory could make them.[30]

What was done at one council was sometimes confirmed at another. Thus what was done in the great council in Baccanfield was confirmed in the same year at another held in July at Cloveshoe. So a gift at Easter was confirmed at Christmas.[31]

That the witena-gemot sometimes resisted the royal acts, appears from their not choosing to consider valid a gift of land by Baldred, king of Kent, because he did not please them.[32]

The witena-gemot frequently appears to us, in the Saxon remains, as the high court of judicature of the kingdom, or as determining disputed questions about land.

[28] Astle's MS. Chart. No. 2.
[29] Ibid. No. 12.
[30] Ibid. No. 21.
[31] Ibid. No. 2.; and MS. Claud. c. 9. 124.
[32] Spelm. Conc. p. 340.

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In 896, Æthelred, the ealdorman of Mercia, convened all the witan of Mercia, (which had not yet been reduced into a province,) the bishops, ealdormen, and all the nobility, at Gloucester, with the leave of Alfred. "They consulted how they most justly might hold their theod-scipe, both for God and for the world, and right many men, both clergy and laity, concerning the lands and other things, that were detained." At this gemot, the bishop of Worcester made his complaint of the wood-land of which he was deprived. All the witan declared that the church should have its rights preserved, as well as other persons. A discussion and an accommodation took place.[33]

In another case of disputed lands, the bishop states, that he could obtain no right before Æthelred was lord of Mercia. He assembled the witan of Mercia at Saltwic, about manifold needs, both ecclesiastical and civil. "Then (says the bishop) I spoke of the monastery with the ɛɲɲɛ ȝɛ ꝑɲıꝛɛ, (conveyances of the land,) and desired my right. Then Eadnoth, and Alfred, and Ælfstan, pledged me that they would either give it to me, or would, among their kinsfolk, find a man who would take it on the condition of being obedient to me." No man, however, would take the land on these terms, and the parties came to an accommodation on the subject.[34]

In 851, the monks of Croyland, having suffered much from some violent neighbours, laid their complaint before the witena-gemot. The king ordered the sheriff of Lincoln, and his other officers in that district, to take a view of the lands of the monastery, and to make their report to him and his council, wherever they should be, at the end of Easter. This was done, and the grievances were removed.[35]

[33] Heming. Chart. i. p. 93. [34] Ibid. p. 120.
[35] Ingulf, p. 12. See other instances, Hem. p. 17. 27. 50.

CHAP. V.

Taxation.

The power of the witena-gemot over the public gelds of the kingdom we cannot detail. The lands of the Anglo-Saxons, the burghs, and the people, appear to us, in all the documents of our ancestors, as subjected to certain definite payments to the king as to their lords; and we have already stated, that by a custom, whose origin is lost in its antiquity, among the Anglo-Saxons, all their lands, unless specially exempted, were liable to three great burdens; to the building and reparation of bridges; also of fortifications, and to military expeditions. But what we now call taxation seems to have begun in the time of Ethelred, and to have arisen from the evils of a foreign invasion. Henry of Huntingdon, speaking of the payment of ten thousand pounds to the Danes, to buy off their hostility, says, "This evil has lasted to our days, and long will continue, unless the mercy of God interferes; for we now (in the twelfth century) pay that to our kings from custom which was paid to the Danes from unspeakable terror."[36] This payment, and those which followed, are stated to have been ordered by the king and the witena-gemot.[37]

Under sovereigns of feeble capacity, the witena-gemot seems to have been the scene of those factions which always attend both aristocracies and democracies, when no commanding talents exist to predominate in the discussions, and to shape the council.

The reigns of Ethelred the Second, and of the Confessor, were distinguished by the turbulence, and even treason, of the nobles. Of the former, our

[36] Hen. Hunt. lib. v. p. 357. Bromton Chron. p. 879. Ingulf also complains heavily of these exactions, p. 55.

[37] Sax. Chron. 126. 132. 136. 140. 142. Unless we refer it to the Anglo-Saxon period, I do not see when the principle could have originated which is recognised in Magna Charta and in its preparatory articles, and is so concisely mentioned by Chaucer in these two lines, —

"The king taxeth not his men
But by assent of the comminaltie."

Ecl. fol. p. 88.

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Malmsbury writes, "Whenever the duces met in the council, some chose one thing and some another. They seldom agreed in any good opinion. They consulted more on domestic treasons, than on the public necessities.[38]

It was indeed becoming obvious that the extreme independence of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy, during the last two reigns, was destroying the monarchy and injuring the nation. And if the Norman Conqueror had failed in his invasion, and had not, by tightening the bonds of feudality, homage, wardship, and law, reduced the diverging and contradictory power of the nobility into a state of more salutary subordination, it would have become pernicious to the king and people, and even to itself; and have brought the land to that state of faction and civil warfare from which the Saxons had rescued it, and of which Poland and Albania have given us modern examples.

[38] Malmsb. p. 63.

## CHAP. VI.

*Some General Principles of the* ANGLO-SAXON *Constitution and Laws.*

CHAP. VI.

FROM a careful perusal of the laws, charters, and documents of the Anglo-Saxons which remain, the following may be selected as a statement of some of the great general principles of their constitution and laws:—

At the head of the state was THE KING; the executive authority of the nation, and an essential part of its legislature; the receiver and expender of all taxations; the centre and source of all jurisprudence; the supreme chief of its armies; the head of its landed property; the lord of the free, and of all burghs, excepting such as he had consented to grant to others; the person intrusted to summon the witena-gemot, and presiding at it; possessed of the other prerogatives that have been noticed; but elective, and liable to be controuled by the witena-gemot.

Co-existing as anciently as the sovereign, if not anterior, and his elector, was A WITENA-GEMOT or parliament, consisting of the nobles holding land, including the superior thanes, and containing also milites, or those who were afterwards called knights, and likewise others without any designations, who were probably citizens and burgesses.

A church-establishment pervaded the country, consisting of archbishops, bishops, abbots, and priors, who were dignitaries sitting in the witena-gemot; comprising also inferior degrees of clergy, as deans, canons, archdeacons, priests, parochial rectors, &c.; besides the monks and nuns of their various cloisters.

The highest orders of nobility were open to the lowest classes of life.

A nobility existed with the titles of ealdorman, hold, heretoch, eorl, and thegn. These titles were personal and not inherited. That of thegn was probably connected with their lands. Some part of the nobility were distinguished by their birth, others by their office. The possessed lands of all were to be transmissible to their heirs as they pleased by their wills; but no system of primogeniture.

The landed property of the nation was generally bound to build castles and bridges, and to serve the king for a limited time, in

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his military expeditions, in proportion to the quantity of their land. To certain extents of it, independent legal jurisdictions were attached, exempt from all others.

An order of milites; made by the investment of the military belt, who were the privileged classes that served for the lands of the nobility and clergy and for their own, and who could not serve in the army in this rank nor command others until it had been conferred. These were the superior class of the free.

A class of freemen; with the king for their lord and defender, subject to no other master but whom they chose to serve.

The majority of the population, slaves or bondsmen to the other classes of society, with many shades of servility or of employment; who had no constitutional or political right, but were part of the property of their master, and as such, bought, sold, and transmissible at his pleasure; but for whose benefit the laws were watchful, and made from time to time various kind and superintending regulations, to promote their good usage and emancipation as well as good conduct.

No property of the nobility, clergy, or free, was taxed without the consent of these orders, given in the witena-gemot.

All the nobles and free were required to be always armed with arms appropriate to their condition.

All the free were required to place themselves in some tything; and every one was to be under bail for his general good behaviour, under certain regulations; and the bail were to answer for his quiet conduct.

Bail was to be given for all prosecutions, and for all defences.

Offences were punished by fines to the state, as well as by compensation to the party.

Every class had a pecuniary value fixed on it, at which each individual of it was estimated, called his were; and also another called mund, by which the value of his social peace was guarded.

A high regard for the personal liberty of the free subject, while unoffending against the laws; and repeated provisions made to punish those who imprisoned or bound him without legal justice.

Their principle of repelling criminal accusations was that of the accused producing a certain number of his neighbours, who swore to their belief of his innocence. Of this custom our habit of producing witnesses to character is a remnant. This imposed on every one the strongest obligation to maintain a good character in his neighbourhood.

To this principle was attached at length the right of trial by jury. No record marks the date of its commencement. It was therefore either one of their immemorial institutions, or was introduced by the Danish colonists, among whose countrymen it prevailed.

From the extreme independence and violence of the great, and from the warlike spirit and habit of all their society, every stranger and traveller was considered as a suspected person, and jealously watched by many legal restrictions.

From the same cause, all purchases above a very small sum were required to be public, and in the presence of witnesses, in every city appointed for that purpose.

Although the right of property was a fixed principle among them, yet it was subject to certain rules, both of tenure and transmission, and to certain payments; but none of these seem to have been arbitrary, but all definite, known, and customary.

Public fairs at certain seasons, and markets every week, were allowed by law, and usually granted by charter. Tolls and payments to those entitled to receive them accompanied their sales; and tolls also were levied on the high roads on those who passed with traffic.

Every man was ordered to perform to others the right that he desired to have himself.

Judges were warned that every act should be carefully distinguished, and the judgment be always given righteously according to the deed; and be moderated according to the degree of the offence.

The superior orders were emphatically enjoined to comfort and feed the poor; to gladden and not distress widows and orphans, and not to harass or oppress strangers and travellers.

The witena-gemot declared that just laws should be established before God and the world, and that all that was unlawful should be carefully abolished; and that every man, poor or rich, should be entitled to his common rights, or, as they termed it, be worthy of his folk-right.

The principle of the laws was that of continual improvement, either by addition, annulment, or qualification, as circumstances required, and without any principle of immutability. The meetings of the witena-gemot gave the means of this improvement, and their laws for the conversion of slaves into free men, contrary to the interest of the chieftains, exhibited striking evidence of the impulse of the improving spirit.

That legal redress should be refused to no one, was one of Ina's laws, which enacted penalties on the shire-men or judges who gave refusal:

That revenge should not be taken personally till legal justice had been sought was another.

The natural liberty of every individual was to be restricted by definite laws so far as social good required, but only by definite and previously enacted laws.

Not only the life and liberty of the free were strictly guarded by law, but every limb of the body had its protecting penalty, which was to be paid by those who injured it, that the safety of every individual might be reduced to as great a certainty as positive law and punishment could make it.

To discourage fighting and personal violence was a continual object of the witena-gemot; and also to repress those habits of reputable robbery and rapine which the powerful and warlike indulged in.

The domestic peace of every individual was promoted by strong

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laws against trespasses in his house or lands; and every one was required to make hedges to keep his cattle from injuring another.

The observance of Sunday as a day of rest from all worldly labour was strictly enforced.

To abate the pride and violences of a powerful and oppressive aristocracy, the Anglo-Saxon clergy taught the natural equality of man, which Alfred also enforced.

But the gradation of ranks was a principle recognised by all the laws; and offences were differently punished according to the quality of both the offender and the offended.

Each class had its appropriate rights and protecting penalties, and its appointed redress; each was kept distinct, but each was rescued from the oppressions of the other; and the law and government, as far as they could operate, watched impartially over all, and for the benefit of all.

The character of individuals was protected as well as their right and property; and slanderous words were subjected to punishment.

The fair sex were taken by the law under its protection, and the principle of respecting and exalting it appears in one of our earliest laws, which placed the children, on the father's death, under the care of the mother; and by another forbidding concubinage; and by others protecting them from violence and forced marriages.

A tenderness even for animals appears in the provision that lambs should not be sheared before Midsummer.

We will close this enumeration by adding the principles which appear in the laws of king Canute: —

That just laws shall be universally established.

We forbid that any Christian man should be consigned to death for a small cause, but rather that a peace-like punishment should be established for the public benefit; that man may not destroy the work of the Divine hands for a little cause, who was redeemed by so dear a price.

That it should be always contemplated in every way how the best councils may be adopted for the benefit of the public:

That every one twelve winters old should swear that he will not be a thief, nor the adviser of a thief:

That nothing shall be bought above four pennies' worth, living or dead, without the true witness of four men.

No one shall receive another into his house for more than three days, unless one that had previously served him as a follower.

Every master shall be the pledge or bail for his own family, and answer for it, if accused.

If any friendless man or stranger be accused, so that he has no bail, he must be put into the pillory till he doth go to the ordeal.

A man convicted of perjury shall be disqualified for giving evidence afterwards.

Every man might hunt in his own woods and fields.

## CHAP. VII.

### *Their Official and other Dignities.*

CHAP. VII.

Ealdorman.

THE EALDORMAN was the highest officer in the kingdom. In rank he was inferior to an etheling; for when an etheling's were-geld was fifteen thousand thrymsas, an ealdorman's was but eight thousand.[1] He was the chief of a shire, and he lost this dignity if he connived at the escape of a robber, unless the king pardoned him.[2] He was one of the witan, who attended the witena-gemot.[3] He presided with the bishop at the scire-gemot, which he was ordered to attend[4], and the folc-gemot.[5] He ranked with a bishop[6], but was superior to the thegn.[7] He had great civil powers in administering justice, and also enjoyed high military authority; he is mentioned as leading the shire to battle against the enemy.[8] To draw weapons before him, incurred a penalty of one hundred shillings[9]; and to fight before him in a gemot incurred a fine to him of one hundred and twenty shillings, besides other punishments.[10] The ealdorman is a title which occurs perpetually in the Saxon Chronicle.

Eorl.

The EORL is a dignity recognised in our earliest laws. It appears in those of Ethelbert, who died in 616, where offences in the tune and against the birele of an eorl are expressly punished.[11] He is also mentioned in a charter, dated 680.[12] The mund of his widow is highly estimated.[13] He is also no-

[1] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 71.
[2] Ibid. 20.
[3] Ibid. 14.
[4] Ibid. 78. 136.
[5] Ibid. 42.
[6] Ibid. 38.
[7] Ibid. 22. 71.
[8] Sax. Chron. p. 78.
[9] Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 38.
[10] Ibid. 42.
[11] Ibid. 3.
[12] Spelman. Concil. p. 164.
[13] Wilk. Leg. p. 7.

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ticed in the laws of Alfred, Edward, Ethelstan, and Edgar.[14]

An eorl's heriot was four horses saddled and four horses not saddled, four helms, four mails, eight spears and shields, four swords, and two hundred mancusa, of gold, which was twice a thegn's heriot.[15] To be an eorl was a dignity to which a thegn might arrive[16], and even a ceorl.[17]

In 656, Wulfer in his charter mentions the eorls: "I, Wulfer, kyning, with the king and with eorls, and with herotogas, and with thegnas, the witnesses of this gift."[18] The persons who sign this, with the king and clergy, call themselves ealdormen. The title of eorl occurs again in a grant of 675[19], and afterwards.[20]

In the fragment of poetry in the Saxon Chronicle to the year 975, Edward, the son of Edgar, is called the eorla ealder, the ruler of eorls.[21]

In 966, Oslac is stated to have received his ealdordome. In 975, he is called se mære eorl, the great earl, and is stated to have been banished[22]; he is also called ealdorman.[23] This same Oslac is mentioned in the laws of Edgar as an earl: "Then let Oslac eorl promote it, and all the army that in this ealdordome remaineth."[24] These passages induce a belief that eorl and ealdorman were but different denominations of the same official dignity. Yet, when we find in the Chronicle such distinctions, in the same paragraph, as "Ealfrice ealdorman, and Thorode eorl[25]," we are led to imagine that there must have been some peculiar traits by which they were discriminated. But it is obvious, from the Saxon Chronicle, that eorldome[26] expressed

[14] Wilk. 35. 53. 70. 82.
[15] Ibid. 144.
[16] Ibid. 71.
[17] Ibid. 112.
[18] Sax. Chron. p. 37.
[19] Ibid. 42.
[20] Ibid. 62.
[21] Ibid. 123.
[22] Ibid. 121. 123.
[23] Ibid. 122.
[24] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 82.
[25] Sax. Chron. 127.
[26] Ibid. 168, 169.

the same thing that ealdordome has been applied to signify.

In the latter part of the Anglo-Saxon period, the title ealdorman seems to have been superseded by that of eorl.[27] The iarl of the Northmen was the same title. We cannot now ascertain the precise distinction of rank and power that prevailed between the eorl and the ealdorman.

Heretoch. Hold.

The term HERETOCH implies the leader of an army; and HOLD is mentioned as a dignity in Æthelstan's laws, whose were was higher than that of a thegn.[28] Many persons with this title are mentioned in the Saxon Chronicle[29], in the years 905, 911.

The GEREFAS were officers appointed by the executive power, and in rank inferior to the eorl or ealdorman. They were of various kinds. The heh-gerefa is mentioned, whose were was four thousand thrymsas.[30] Also the wic-gerefa, before whom purchases of the Kentishmen in London were to be made, unless they had good witnesses.[31] And the porte-gerefa, or the gerefa of the gate, who was to witness all purchases without the gate, unless other unimpeachable persons were present.[32]

Gerefa, or Reeve.

The gerefas were in every byrig.[33] They were judicial officers[34], and were ordered to judge according to right judgment, and the dom-boc, or book of judgment. They delivered over offenders to punishment.[35] They were present at the folc-gemot[36], where they were to do justice. They were ordered to convene a gemot every four weeks, to end lawsuits.[37] They took bail or security in their respective shires for every one to keep the peace; and if they omitted to take the bail, and neglected their duty,

[27] Sax. Chron. 164—173.
[28] Wilk. Leg. Sax. 71.
[29] Sax. Chron. 101. 103.
[30] Wilk. Leg. 71.
[31] Ibid. 9.
[32] Ibid. 48.
[33] Ibid. 54, 55.
[34] Ibid. 9. 12. 48, 49.
[35] Ibid. 12.
[36] Ibid. 39. 41.
[37] Ibid. 50.

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they lost their office, and the king's friendship, and forfeited to him one hundred and twenty shillings.[38]

In cases of robbery, application was to be made to the gerefa in whose district it was; and he was to provide as many men as were sufficient to apprehend the thief, and avenge the injury.[39] If any one became "untrue" to every one, the king's gerefa was to go and bring him under bail, that he might be brought to justice to answer his accuser. If the offender could find no bail, he was to be killed.[40] He was to supply such prisoners with food who had no relations that could support them.[41] He was to defend the abbots in their necessities.[42]

They were made responsible for their official conduct. If they neglected their duty, it was ordered, in the laws of Ethelstan, that they should be fined for their delinquency, and be displaced, and the bishop was to announce it to the gerefa in his province. If they broke the law, they had to pay five pounds the first time, the price of their were the second, and for the third offence they lost all their property.[43] If they took a bribe to pervert right, they were punished as severely.[44]

The thegns of the Anglo-Saxons were in rank below the eorls and ealdormen. They formed a species of nobility peculiar to those ancient times;

[38] Wilk. Leg. 69. [39] Ibid. 68. [40] Ibid. 103.
[41] Ibid. 34. [42] Ibid. 115. [43] Ibid. 61.
[44] Ibid. 62. The exposition of the duties of an eorl, and the higher dignities, which exists in Anglo-Saxon, adds something to our notions of their character: "Eorls and heretogas, and the secular judges, and also the gerefas, must necessarily love justice before God and the world, and must never by unjust judgment lay aside their own wisdom for either enmity or friendship. They must not thus turn wrong into right, nor decree injustice to the oppression of the poor. They should, above all other things, honour and defend the church; they should protect widows and orphans, and help the needy, and watch to guard the enslaved. Thieves and robbers they should hate, and spoilers and plunderers destroy, unless they will amend and abstain for ever from their violences. For this is true which I say, believe it who will, 'Woe to those that inflict injury, unless they amend: most surely they shall suffer in the dim and deep caverns of the infernal punishments, apart from all help,'" &c. Lib. Const. Wilk. Leg. 149.

and though, at this distant period, they cannot be delineated accurately, yet, from the circumstances which we can collect, we shall find them a very curious and interesting order of men.

It has been already mentioned, that it was a rank attainable by all, even by the servile, and that the requisites which constituted the dignity are stated in the laws to have been the possession of five hides of his own land, a church, a kitchen, a bell-house, a judicial seat at the burgh gate, and a distinct office or station in the king's hall. It is not clear whether this means an office in the king's house-hold, or a seat in the witena-gemot. The latter has some probabilities in its favour.

But it was essential to a thegn, that he should be a landed proprietor; for though a ceorl had a helm, mail, and a gold-handled sword, yet if he had no land, the laws declare that he must still remain a ceorl.[45]

The thegns were of two descriptions. The inferior sort was called thegn, and the superior were distinguished as king's thegns. The laws recognise these two descriptions. A king's thegn accused of homicide was to acquit himself of guilt by twelve king's thegns; a thegn of lessa maga, with eleven of his equals.[46] The here-geat, or heriot of the king's thegn that was nearest to him, was two horses saddled, and two not saddled, two swords, four spears, shields, helms, and mails, and fifty mancusa of gold. But the here-geat of a middling thegn was but one horse, and his trappings and arms.[47] By comparing these heriots, we may see how greatly superior the rank of the king's thegn was esteemed.

[45] Wilk. Leg. 70.

[46] Ibid. 47. So the superior thane is mentioned in the laws as having a thane under him, serving him as his lord in the king's hall. Ibid. 71.

[47] Ibid. 144. The officers of the king's household were also called thegns, as his disc-thegn, hregel-thegn, hors-thegn, or the thanes of his dishes, his wardrobe, and his horses.

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The inferior thegns appear to have been numerous. In every borough, says a law, thirty-three thanes were chosen to witness. In small burghs, and to every hundred, twelve were to be selected.[48] Thegns had halls.

Thegns are twice mentioned in the laws as thegns born so.[49] Perhaps the title was attached to their landed property, and descended with it. In the Domesday Survey, many lands are mentioned in several counties, which are called "Terra tainorum;" the land of the thegns; and they are mentioned also with their milites. Thegn-lands seem to have had some analogy with the baronies of the Norman times.

If a thegn had a church in his boclande, with a place of burial, he was to give to the church one third of his own tenths; if he had not a burial-place, he was to give what he chose out of the nine parts.[50]

What Alfred calls the king's thegn is in Bede the king's minister.[51] No one was to have any socne or jurisdiction over him but the king.[52]

We learn from Domesday-book, that for the tenure of five hides of land the owner was liable to the fyrd, or Saxon militia. We have also found, that the tenure of five hides of land was essential to the dignity of thegn. The king's thegn is mentioned in the laws as attending in his expeditions, and as having a thegn under him.[53]

The thegn was also a magistrate, and might lose his dignity. The laws declared, that if a judge decided unjustly, he should pay to the king one hundred and twenty shillings, unless he could swear that he knew

[48] Wilk. Leg. 80. Their halls are often mentioned in Domesday-book.
[49] Ibid. 125. 127.
[50] Ibid. 130. 144.
[51] Bede. lib. ii. c. 9. and lib. iv. c. 22. Alfred, p. 511. and 591.
[52] Wilk. Leg. 118. The thegn is not merely termed a liberalis homo, or free man, as in Tex. Roff, but his rank is mentioned in the higher degree of the comparative mood, as one of the liberalioribus, one of the more free.
[53] Wilk. Leg. 71.

no better; and he was to lose his thegn-scipe, unless he could afterwards buy it of the king.[54]

They are thus mentioned by Edgar: "In every byrig, and in every scire, I will have my kingly rights, as my father had; and my thegns shall have their thegn-ship in my time, as they had in my father's."[55]

His were was two thousand thrymsa.[56] It is elsewhere stated as equal to that of six ceorls, or twelve hundred shillings.[57] If a thief took refuge with a thegn, he was allowed three days' asylum.[58]

The judicial magistracy of the thegns appears from their assisting at the shire-gemots. The Northmen had also a dignity of this sort, for thegns are mentioned in Snorre.

I am inclined to believe that the superior thanes were those who were afterwards called barons, for the laws of Henry the First put the titles as synonymous[59]; and that the next degree of thegns were those who were after the Conqueror's time termed knights, because five hydes of land were the feudum of a knight[60], and the thegn of five hydes of land is men-

[54] Wilk. Leg. 78. 135. [55] Ibid. 80. [56] Ibid. 71.

[57] Ibid. 64. 72. He is mentioned as synonymous with twelfhynde man. Leg. Hem.; Wilk. 265.; and Du Cange voc. Liberalet. In another passage of the laws of Henry I. the twelfhynde is mentioned as a man plene nobilis, and a thane, p. 269. Such a man was to swear as for sixty hydes of land. Wilk. 18. We may, therefore, consider this as the quantity of land of the higher thane. The comparative dignities of the land, in the time of Ethelstan, will appear from their different weres:

| | |
|---|---|
| The king's was - - - - | 30,000 thrymsa. |
| Etheling's, or king's sons, - - | 15,000 |
| Bishop - - - - - | 8000 |
| Ealdorman - - - - | 8000 |
| Holdes and high-gerefa - - | 4000 |
| Mass thegn - - - - | 2000 |
| World's thegn - - - - | 2000 |
| Ceorl - - - - - | 266 |

[58] Wilk. Leg. 63.

[59] Thaini vel baronis. Wilk. Leg. p. 250. and 276. They are frequently classed with barons, as 272. The same is implied in the Hist. Rames., who uses the term baronis where the Saxon word would have been thegn, p. 395. So Hist. El. 475.

[60] Quinque hidæ (faciunt) fœdum militis. Chr. T. Red. ap. Blamt. voc. Virgata.

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tioned as that rank of thegn which served the more dignified thegns.[61] These inferior thanes were called middling thanes.[62] A general idea of an Anglo-Saxon nobleman may be formed from the note below.[63]

[61] Wilk. Leg. p. 71. The Epistle of the prior and convent of Canterbury to Henry II. states, that before the Conqueror's time there were no knights in England but threnges, and that this king converted them into knights. Wilk. 429. This authority tends to show that Drenge was the Anglo-Saxon word at first applied to express their milites. It occurs frequently in their poems on martial subjects. The term cniht at last superseded it. Drenches occur in Domesday.

[62] In Saxon medeme, and in Latin mediocris. The comparative ranks in Henry the First's time appear thus in their revelationes; *the comes*, eight horses, four helmets, four coats of mail, eight lances and shields, four swords, and one hundred mancæ of gold; *the king's thegn*, "who is next," four horses, two swords, four lances and shields, one helm and mail, and fifty mancæ; *the middling thane*, one horse, with his trappings and arms, and his half-hang. Leg. Hen. Wilk. 245. We may look on these as corresponding with the ranks of earls, barons, and knights.

[63] The Monk of Ramsay has left a full picture of what was then deemed an accomplished nobleman, in the following traits of the character of one of Edgar's favourites, and in Oswald's conversation with his brother: —

"His innate prudence, his noble birth, and approved vigour of body in warlike affairs, had obtained from the king much dignity and favour. He was distinguished for religion at home, and for the exercise of his strength and use of military discipline abroad. He adorned the nobility which he derived from his birth by the beauty of his manners. Cheerful and pleasing in his countenance; venerable in his mien; courteous in his fluent conversation; mild and sincere in his words; in duty impartial; in his affections cautious; with a heart resembling his face; constant in good faith; steady and devout. In counsel persuading what was right; ending disputes by the equity of his judgments; revering the divine love in others, and persuading them to cultivate it."

Oswald says of him: "Throughout the king's palace he was famed and esteemed; his nod seemed to govern the royal mind; clothed in silk and purple, he shared the royal banquets with us in the court," &c. His brother, also a favourite with the king, tells the bishop: "I am a man under the power of another, exercising also authority myself. Nobility of birth, abundance of wealth, the wisdom of the world, the grace of the lip, and the public favour, as well of the rich as of the poor, have alike exalted me; yet I cannot apply to the good studies which I desire. Often the king's difficulties, or warlike exercises, or the distributions of presents to the knights, or the judgment of causes, or the exercise of punishment on the guilty, or some other forensic business, which I can hardly if ever decline without offence, occupy and fatigue me." Hist. Ram. 3 Gale, 395, 396.

## CHAP. VIII.

*Some Features of the Political State of the* ANGLO-SAXONS.

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OUR Saxon ancestors appear to us at first in that state in which a great nation is preparing to be formed on new principles, unattained by human experience before. The process was that of leading their population to such a practical system as would combine the liberty of the people with the independence and elevated qualities of a high-spirited nobility, and with the effective authority of a presiding king, and of such wise and improving laws as the collected wisdom of the nation should establish from the deliberations of its witena-gemot, not legislating only for the powerful.

The first stage in this political formation was the diffusion and independence of a great and powerful nobility. After these were radically fixed in the land, the influence and prerogatives of the king were enlarged, and the numbers of the free were increased. A new bulwark was also raised for the benefit of all the three classes, in a richly endowed church, who, besides their political utility in supporting, as circumstances pressed, each order of the state from the oppressions of the rest, introduced into the Anglo-Saxon mind all the literature it possessed. The course of events led all these great bodies into occasional collisions with each other, and with foreign invaders, till the actual practice of life had abated their mutual excesses and injurious powers. The nobility and great landed proprietors, however, still too much preponderated in their exclusive privileges,

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when the Norman Conquest occurred to fix them in a greater subordination to the crown and to the law than the Anglo-Saxon constitution permitted. From the time of the Conquest the English aristocracy declined into an inferior, but permanent state of power, more compatible with the freedom and prosperity of the nation, and the liberties of the people, while the number of the free were proportionably multiplied.

That a great landed and independent aristocracy should have been first formed in the nation was the natural result of their mode of invading the Britons. Small fleets of Anglo-Saxon warriors successively landed, and forced from the Britons certain districts of the island, which their future warfare enlarged. Being comparatively few in number, the division of the conquered territory threw large tracts of land into the hands of the first chieftains and their followers, and the conquered natives were made their slaves. Their king being then but one of themselves, elected as their war-king, had no pretensions to more power or prerogatives than they chose to concede; and hence a martial aristocracy, headed by a king, became the prevailing character of the Anglo-Saxon body politic. Their feuds with each other led the weaker party at all times to seek aid from the king, and the people had no other asylum than his power from the violence of their superiors. Hence the royal authority was perpetually invited into greater power and activity for the general benefit; and the Christian clergy made it venerable to the nation by the religious considerations which they attached to it.

Thus the first state of the Anglo-Saxon nation was that of a great landed body, in proud independence, of fierce spirit, and attached to military habits. The rest of the nation were chiefly enslaved peasantry and domestics, and free burghs, with poor artisans, and tradesmen of small consideration and no greater

property; with a clergy that, in their tithes and church payments, and in the endowments of their monasteries, were sharing with the nobles the land and property of the country.

But the same evil existed among the Anglo-Saxons that attends every country in which the laws of property have become established, and to which extensive commerce has not opened its channels; that of continually having an unprovided population, which had their subsistence to seek, and their love of consequence to gratify. The monasteries took off some portion of this disquieting body, which was the more formidable to the peaceful, from the warlike habits of the country; but the larger part sought their provision perpetually by the sword. Hence robbery and rapine became one of the main internal features of the country; and more of the laws of every Anglo-Saxon king were directed against such plunderers than to any other single subject. Hence the severity against those who had no lords or no friends to bail them. It was this habit that compelled the law to enjoin that every body should be armed, and have their appointed weapons ready, that the burghs and towns might be more secure, and the marauders repressed or pursued. The same cause urged Alfred and the witena-gemots to put every man into a state of bail for good behaviour, and to shackle what little trade there was, by making it illegal, unless transacted before deputed officers and witnesses, and by treating every traveller as a suspicious wanderer. Hence all who could afford it had knights and retainers in their pay, to protect their property and persons from violence. Hence the laws against binding free men, and selling them and Christians for slaves; for by seizing those who had property, the violent extorted a ransom, or by disposing of them as slaves, extracted a profit from their misery. Hence we find, amid the

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chronicles of the clergy, repeated instances of land torn by force and rapine even from them. And we may form some notion of the amount and danger of these depredations, by observing that, in the laws of Ina, they are described as of three classes. While they did not exceed seven men together they were called thieves (theofas); but from that number to thirty-five they were called a hloth or band; when they were more than thirty-five they were termed an army. Each of these offences were differently punished.[1] In the subsequent reigns we find ealdormen, thegns, and others, possessing themselves of lands by force from weaker proprietors.[2]

Much individual prosperity could not be expected from such habits; but the bounty of nature every year pours such riches from the earth, that, notwithstanding these habits of depredation, the property of the country could not fail to increase. Timber grows, grass diffuses itself, fruit-trees blossom, and animals multiply, and minerals enlarge, whether man labours, idles, or combats. But there were plenty of slaves to pursue the husbandry that was needed, and therefore all the natural riches of animal, vegetable, and mineral production were perpetually accumulating in the country. These are the foundations of wealth in all; and though the Anglo-Saxons had at first but little external or internal traffic, and imperfect roads, except those left by the Romans, yet the permanent property of the country was increasing in the multiplied permanent comforts of each individual. Every additional article of furniture or convenience from the forest or the mine; from the horns, hairs, hides, or bones of his animals; every barn of corn and stock of salted provision, or pile of turf, wood, or peat, beyond his immediate consumption, was, as well as

[1] Leg. Ina. Wilk. 17.

[2] The instances of these are numerous. See of one single monastery, Hist. El. p. 466, 467. 469. 482, 483, 484, 485, &c. &c.

the stones he dug from the quarry, or the articles he manufactured from his flax or metals, an accumulation of actual property to himself, and an augmentation of the general wealth of the nation. All these articles were every year accumulating in the country, and many were by degrees exchanged for the gold and silver, and natural produce of other countries, as slowly increasing trade gradually brought them from abroad. Hence every reign discovers to us some indication of an increasing affluence, as well as an increasing population, of the Anglo-Saxon nation.

The progress of the Anglo-Saxons to wealth was accelerated by the previous civilisation of Britain. The Romans had retired from it but a few years before their invasion, and had raised many temples and buildings in the island, and filled them with appropriate furniture, of which much remained to assist the ingenuity and excite the taste of the new conquerors. That gold and silver had abounded in the island, while it was possessed by the Romans and Britons, the coins that have been found at every period since, almost every year, sufficiently testify; and it was the frequency of these emerging to view which made treasure-trove an important part of our ancient laws, and which is mentioned by Alfred as one of the means of becoming wealthy. In the earliest Anglo-Saxon laws, almost all the penalties are pecuniary, in silver coin. That bullion was not deficient in the country, but was continually increasing, appears from the numerous instances of purchase monies given in gold and silver, either coined or by weight, for lands, of which the charters still remain. By the quantities of money given to buy land for a monastery, by one bishop and by its first abbot[3], it would

[3] Thus for the Ely monastery they paid to various persons the following sums: —

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 100 pounds and a golden cross, | 100 aurei, | 20 aurei, |
| | 60 pounds of silver, | 40 shillings, |

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appear that the church and monasteries had abundance of it; and indeed the pecuniary payments appointed for them, besides their tithes and presents, gave them great facilities of acquiring it[4], as the fines and gafols poured still more into the royal exchequer. The great quantity of payments recorded in Domesday-book, as due to the king, in pounds, shillings, and pence, from the various subdivisions of lands in every county, show both the diffusion and the abundance of bullion among the Anglo-Saxons.[5]

But our ancestors by their conquests among the Britons obtained immediately abundance of cattle, corn, slaves, agricultural iustruments, and cultivated lands. They found in the island, as Guildas and Bede state, twenty-eight noble cities, and innumerable castles with their walls, towers, and gates. Productive veins of copper, iron, lead, and even silver had been opened. A great supply of shell-fish, yielding a beautiful scarlet dye; and muscles with pearls, mostly

---

15 pounds,
100 shillings,
7 pounds,
4 pounds,
15 pounds,
20 shillings,
30 aurei,
200 aurei,
30 aurei,
11 pounds,
20 pounds,
50 aurei,
8 pounds,
80 aurei,
200 aurei,
6 pounds,
8 pounds,
12 pounds,
80 shillings,
7 pounds,
90 aurei,
112 memmi,
100 shillings,
20 shillings,
30 pounds,
40 shillings,
40 pounds,
4 pounds, 18 pence,
100 shillings,
15 pounds,
100 shillings,
50 aurei,
20 pounds, 10 aurei,
15 pounds,
100 aurei,
10 pounds,
40 aurei,
20 pounds,
11 pounds,
4 pounds.
Hist. Eliens. 465—488.

[4] Thus a plough-alms, fifteen days before Easter; St. Peter's penny on his anniversary; the church sceat on St. Martin's; the light-money thrice a year; and the soul sceat at every grave. Wilk. Leg. Sax. 121. The church sceat was enforced by Ina, under a penalty of forty shillings, and twelve times the money withheld. Ib. p. 15. Besides these certainties, a quantity of money was always coming to them from wills, as already noticed. Other occasions also produced it. Thus a thegn, to have his parish church dedicated, brought a silver scutella of forty shillings. Hist. El. 467.

[5] That the clergy and monasteries advanced money to the landed proprietors, we have an instance in Ely monastery. Oslac had to pay the king Edgar one hundred aurei; he had not so much, and borrowed of the bishop forty aurei, for which he gave him forty acres. Hist. El. 476.

white, but some of other colours, abounded on their shores. The marine animals, whales, seals, and dolphins, frequented the coasts; salmons and other fish their rivers; and eels and water-fowl their pools and marshes. Vines in some places, and forests in all, increased their general resources of natural wealth.[6]

Settling in a country thus abundantly supplied with the means of affluence, it is not surprising that the Anglo-Saxons became a prosperous people, notwithstanding the retarding effects of their military and predatory habits. After the reign of Alfred they became gradually more commercial. The invasions of the Danes had the effect of connecting them with the countries in the north of Europe, and of leading them to distant voyages of intercourse and traffic. Their progress was such, that by the time of the Norman invasion they had become both populous and rich. Some evidence of their extending intercourse is given by the fact, that some Moors or Africans, as well as Spaniards, were then in the country.[7]

From the views that have been presented of the Anglo-Saxon classes of society, it is obvious that their unprovided poor must have been chiefly of the free. The vassal peasantry of the great and the clergy had their masters to depend upon or to relieve them. But when the freemen were destitute, their situation must have been deplorable. Jealously suspected and pursued by the laws, if they wandered to seek or solicit subsistence; they had no resource, if they could not join armies, or become minstrels and jugglers, or be enlisted as retainers in the service

[6] See Gildas, and Bede's Hist.

[7] Domesday-book mentions Matthæus *de Mauritanie;* and also a Servus, who was an *Afrus*, in the county of Gloucester; also Alured as *Hispanus*. P. 165. 170. 162. 86.

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of the great, but to engage as servants to burghers and others, or to become robbers, outlaws, and foresters. Poor freemen are noticed in Domesday.[8]

It is perhaps in no age from the insufficient productions of nature that any would perish from want. The existing food on the earth always exceeds the wants of its actual inhabitants; but it cannot be distributed by any laws or polity just as individual necessities require. It can only flow to all through the regular channels of civilised society, on the system of equivalent exchange; and the means of acquiring this frequently fail. It is from the temporary want of an equivalent to exchange for the food they need, and not from the non-existence of that food, that so much misery usually pervades society, and at times rises to an afflicting height. Yet the evil cannot be remedied by a legislature without invading those sacred rights of property which are the cement of the social fabric. Benevolence must effect on this point what no law can command. The poor can only put themselves in possession of equivalents to exchange for food by their personal industry. Where the demand for their labour declines, a wise and discriminating charity must be active to contrive employments for the distressed, that they may acquire the means of obtaining subsistence from those who have it to dispose of, or must in her kindness distribute that subsistence without the equivalent, until increasing occupation can enable the distressed again to provide it.

These principles were not understood by our ancestors; yet the benevolent feelings of the clergy were always labouring to impress on the affluent the duty of succouring the needy. The church gave them the emphatic name of "the poor of God;" and they are frequently so mentioned in the laws; thus presenting

[8] As in Suffolk, fifty-four freemen satis inopes.

them in the most interesting of all relations, as those which the Deity himself presents to human benevolence as his peculiar class, and for whom he solicits our favourable attentions.

But the supplies from individual liberality are always precarious, and usually temporary, and not so salutary to the necessitous as those which, with a conscious exertion of power, independence, and self-merit, they can obtain by their own industry. It was therefore a great blessing to the Anglo-Saxon society, that, as their population increased, an augmented traffic arose, and employments became more numerous. The property of the landholders gradually multiplied in permanent articles raised from their animals, quarries, mines, and woods; in their buildings, their furniture, their warlike stores, their leather apparatus, glass, pigments, vessels, and costly dresses. An enlarged taste for finery and novelty spread as their comforts multiplied. Foreign wares were valued and sought for; and what Anglo-Saxon toil or labour could produce, to supply the wants or gratify the fancies of foreigners, was taken out to barter. All these things gave so many channels of nutrition to those who had no lands, by presenting them with opportunities for obtaining the equivalents on which their subsistence depended. As the bullion of the country increased, it became, either coined or uncoined, the general and permanent equivalent. As it could be laid up without deterioration, and was always operative when it once became in use, the abundance of society increased, because no one hesitated to exchange his property for it. Until coin became the medium of barter, most would hesitate to part with the productions they had reared, and all classes suffered from the desire of hoarding. Coin or bullion released the commodities that all society wanted, from individual fear, prudence, or covetousness, that would for its own uses have withheld

them, and sent them floating through society in ten thousand channels. The Anglo-Saxons were in this happy state. Bullion, as we have remarked, sufficiently abounded in the country[9], and was in full use in exchange for all things. In every reign after Athelstan the trade and employment of the country increased. Pride and the love of pleasure favoured their growth, and still more the fair taste for greater conveniences in every class of society. Population multiplied, and found more occupation for the numbers of its free classes, until it reached that amount at the time of the Conquest, which we shall proceed to enumerate.

[9] Many facts are mentioned in the Chronicles, implying the quantity of the valuable metals in the monasteries, &c. Thus Hereward in his romantic attack of Peterborough, took from the crucifix there the crown of pure gold, and its footstool of red gold; the cope, all of gold and silver, hidden in the steeple; also two gilt shrines, and nine of silver; fifteen great crosses of gold and silver; and "so much gold and silver, and so much treasure in money, robes, and books, that no man can compute the amount." Gurney's Sax. Chron. p. 215.

# CHAP. IX.

## *Sketch of the* Anglo-Saxon *Population.*

CHAP. IX.

In Domesday-book, we have a record of the numbers and condition of the Anglo-Saxon population, which, though not complete, yet affords us sufficient information to satisfy our general curiosity. The following summary has been taken from its statement. For the convenience of the reader the counties there noticed will be enumerated alphabetically here.[1]

[1] The summary in the text was drawn up by Mr. Turner for the earlier editions of this History. Since the publication of these, the able and elaborate work of Sir Henry Ellis has appeared, in which the contents of the Domesday Book are more minutely and accurately analysed, and a variety of important and curious information on the social state and position of the different classes of population spoken of is furnished. The numbers of these various classes as given by Sir H. Ellis differ in a great many instances from those of Mr. Turner's earlier and less perfect summary, chiefly, however, from the different classification adopted. In reprinting these volumes it has been thought best to leave the Author's enumerations unaltered, classifying only the different orders of men, &c., so as to show their relative amounts. It will be seen that the final total given by Sir H. Ellis, after allowing for the repeated occurrence of the same proprietors in different districts, is less than the amount at which Mr. Turner had arrived. The following memoranda as to the meaning of the names under which the population is classed are taken from Sir. H. Ellis's work.

The chief proprietors (among which Sir. H. Ellis includes the king, whom, as treating of the subject population only, Mr. Turner omits) were the great lords, &c. who held their lands directly from the crown.

The "Taini," (or "Thanes"), "Liberi Homines," and generally those classed as "*Tenentes*," were the inferior landholders, who held by various forms of tenure from the king or other chief proprietor. Among these are to be reckoned:

The "Allodarii," or tenants possessing an estate in Allodium, *i. e.* subject to "*hidage*," or land-tax; and in Kent to mulcts to the king for certain offences.

The "Ministri," or "Servientes," or "Præfecti Regis," who held offices more or less servile for the king.

The "Homines," or feudatory tenants privileged to be tried in their lords' courts only.

The "Censorii," "Censarii," or "Censores," and "Gablatores," who held lands paying censum or gablum (tribute to the king), and a large portion of the class called "Milites," some of whom, however, appear to have been in the strict sense of the word soldiers. The "Drenches," or "Drenghs," (or "Dinges,") also were tenants of this description in the southern district of Lancashire, which in Domesday Book is classed as a part of Cheshire; the northern portion being reckoned as part of Yorkshire.

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BEDFORDSHIRE (*Bedefordscire*). [3772.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 55 | Bordarii | 1113 |
| Prefecti regis and others | 21 | Villani | 1766 |
| Tenentes | 102 | Servi | 454 |
| Sochmanni | 88 | Milites | 5 |
| | | Burgenses of Bedford | 9 |

Molendini 86 Silvatici 72 Piscatores 1

BERKSHIRE. [6737.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 63 | Villani | 2424 |
| Other persons | 13 | Servi | 772 |
| Bordarii | 1802 | Hagas noticed | 459 |
| Cotarii | 732 | Others | 169 |

Molini 166 Piscatores 70 Silvatici 67

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE (*Bockingamscire*). [5563.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 56 | Villani | 2885 |
| Taini Regis | 12 | Servi | 828 |
| Sochmanni | 19 | Burgenses of Buckingham | 52 |
| Bordarii | 1320 | | |

Piscatores 19 Molini 129 Silvatici 122
Moldarii 1 Others 110

Among the inferior landholders, having some a more, some a less, privileged condition, we must reckon also the "Sochmanni," "Radmanni," and "Radchenistri," who held lands in the soc, or franchise, of some great baron, on fixed terms of service, and were, in fact, freeholders.

The "Presbyteri," or clergy, met with in the Domesday Summary, form but a small portion of their class, and are probably such only as held lands, and were thus subject to assessment.

The "Præpositus Manerii" was the "Reeve," or steward of the manor, the "Bedellus" the under-steward.

Below these classes came the "Coliberti" and "Buri," who appear to have been a middle class of tenants, between the freeman and the serf, holding their farms, &c. on condition of certain work and service to their lords.

The "Villani" were the higher class of serfs usually attached to the land, and thence called Villeins "*regardant*." The lower order of serfs, or servi, were attached to their lord's person, and could be transferred from one owner to another: they appear to have been the class called Villeins "*in gross*." To this class belong the "Ancillæ," or female serfs. The "Bordarii" are supposed to have been cottagers (from the Saxon "bord," a *cottage*), usually occupying a small portion of land. They appear to be the same as those termed Cotarii, Coteri, Cotmanni, and in other places Coscez, or Coscets.

With reference to the *occupations* enumerated, the most important are the salinæ, or saltworks, the piscaria, or fisheries, the molina or molendina, or mills. The "Porcarii" were usually swine-owners, who rented portions of the woodlands as pasture-land for their pigs. The "Bovarii" were neat herds, the "Fabri," smiths or carpenters.

Haga is the same as domus, and usually as mansura, a house or messuage.

The land is usually divided under four heads: Terra, or arable land; Sylva, or woodland; Pastura, or meadow land; and Pratum, the pasture reserved for the oxen employed on the Terra.

Walenses are Welshmen, Francigenæ all other persons not of English birth.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE (*Grentebrscire*). [5506.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 42 | Bordarii | 1438 | Milites | 34 |
| Tenentes | 53 | Cotarii | 742 | Burgenses of Cambridge | 295 |
| Sochmanni | 245 | Villani | 1898 | Porcarii | 7 |
| Piscatores | 34 | Servi | 563 | Others | 6 |
| Moldarii | 2 | Molini | 121 | | |
| | | Silvatici | 26 | | |

CHESHIRE (*Cestrescire*). [2873.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tenentes | 72 | Villani | 768 | Milites | 12 |
| Radmanni | 134 | Servi | 223 | Burgenses of Chester | 559 |
| Drenches | 54 | Francigenæ | 39 | Piscatores | 29 |
| Bordarii | 633 | | | | |
| Bovarii | 184 | Silvatici | 127 | | |
| | | Salinæ | 10 | Others | 29 |

CORNWALL (*Cornvalgie*). [5606.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 6 | Coliberti | 49 | Villani | 1738 |
| Tenentes | 23 | Bordarii | 2441 | Servi | 1148 |
| Molini | 4 | Pasturæ | 109 | Silvæ | 38 |
| | | | | Cerevisarii | 40 |

DERBYSHIRE (*Derbyscire*). [3140.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 15 | Censorii | 41 | Villani | 1825 |
| Taini | 22 | Sochmanni | 127 | Servi | 16 |
| Tenentes | 167 | Bordarii | 731 | Presbyteri | 51 |
| Molendini | 68 | Silvæ | 71 | Others | 6 |

DEVONSHIRE (*Devonscire*). [18,245.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 50 | Villani | 8246 |
| Taini | 18 | Servi | 3210 |
| Servientes regis | 8 | Burgenses of Exeter | 476 |
| Tenentes | 118 | Barnstaple | 83 |
| Coliberti | 32 | Lideford | 69 |
| Bordarii | 4814 | Totness | 110 |
| Cotarii | 19 | Ochemanton | 4 |
| Cosces | 32 | Others | 41 |
| Porcarii | 296 | Piscatores | 17 |
| Molendini | 79 | Pasturæ | 249 |
| | | Salinæ | 117 |
| | | Silvæ | 157 |

DORSET (*Dorseti*). [8879.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 56 | Taini (proprietors) | 24 |
| Taini | 127 | Liberi homines | 10 |

BOOK VIII.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Censarii | 9 | Cotarii | 185 | Servi | 1165 |
| Coliberti | 33 | Coscez | 146 | Burgenses | 655 |
| Bordarii | 2827 | Villani | 2663 | Molendini | 269 |
| Salinarii | 100 | Silvæ | 239 | Pasturæ | 334 |
| | | Other persons | 37 | | |

### Essex (*Excessa*). [14,549.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 79 | Servi | 2041 | | |
| Sochmanni | 343 | Presbyters | 44 | | |
| Liberi homines | 306 | Burg. of Malden | 180 | | |
| Censarii | 36 | Orsett | 100 | | |
| Bordarii | 6329 | Sudbury | 5 | | |
| Villani | 4014 | Colchester | 400 | | |
| Molendini | 129 | Salinæ | 28 | Piscatores | 48 |
| Silvæ | 437 | Others | 30 | | |

### Gloucestershire (*Glowecesterscire*). [8365.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 66 | Radchenistri | 119 | Villani | 3071 |
| Taini | 16 | Coliberti | 105 | Servi | 2423 |
| Molendini | 254 | Bordarii | 1901 | Burgenses, &c. | 144 |
| Silvæ | 45 | Salinæ | 7 | Piscatores | 90 |
| | | Others | 124 | | |

### Hampshire. [10,631.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| General amount | 9807 | Isle of Wight | 824 |

### Herefordshire. [5510.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 37 | Buri | 18 | Presbyters | 26 |
| Radchenistri | 41 | Bordarii | 1381 | Clerici | 19 |
| Radmanni | 38 | Cotarii | 19 | Milites | 34 |
| Liberi | 15 | Villani | 2052 | Walenses | 41 |
| Homines | 204 | Servi | 966 | Hereford burg. | 70 |
| Subtenentes | 78 | Prepositi | 33 | Clifford burg. | 16 |
| Coliberti | 16 | Bedelli | 21 | Another | 9 |
| Molendini | 95 | Francigenæ | 23 | | |
| Sylvæ | 45 | Salinæ | 8 | Piscatores | 12 |
| Fabri | 23 | Porcarii | 14 | Bovarii | 130 |
| | | Other persons | 26 | | |

### Hertfordshire (*Herfordscire*). [4924.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 43 | Servi | 575 | | |
| Taini regis | 12 | Burgenses of | | | |
| Tenentes | 194 | Escewille | 14 | | |
| Sochmanni | 57 | St. Alban's | 46 | | |
| Bordarii | 1118 | Berchamsteed | 52 | | |
| Cotarii | 853 | Stanestede | 6 | | |
| Villani | 1763 | | | | |
| Molendini | 95 | Silvatici | 87 | Moldarii | 9 |

HUNTINGDONSHIRE (*Huntedunscire*). [2511.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 27 | Sochmanni | 23 | Presbyters and eccl. | 46 |
| Taini | 7 | Homines | 8 | Milites | 16 |
| Tenentes | 42 | Bordarii | 383 | | |
| Molinarii | 33 | Villani | 1886 | | |
| | | Piscatores | 12 | Silvatici | 28 |

KENT (*Chenth*). [14,866.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 305 | Servi | 1142 | Sandwich | 415 |
| Bordarii | 3367 | Burghers of Dover | 42 | Rochester. | 7 |
| Cotarii | 308 | Canterbury | 1600 | Romeney | 166 |
| Villani | 6676 | | | Hide | 231 |
| Molinarii | 212 | Molendini | 107 | Salinæ | 130 |
| | | Piscatores | 158 | | |

LEICESTERSHIRE (*Ledecestre*). [6613.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 52 | Bordarii | 1285 | Milites | 27 |
| Tenentes | 101 | Villani | 2446 | Presbyteri | 34 |
| Sochmanni | 1716 | Servi | 374 | Burgenses | 371 |
| Molinarii | 105 | Francigenæ | 37 | | |
| | | Silvæ | 56 | Others | 9 |

LINCOLNSHIRE. [25,817.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Taini | 27 | Villani | 7168 | | |
| Tenentes | 68 | Burgenses | 274 | | |
| Sochmanni | 11,322 | Lincoln mansuræ | 982 | | |
| Censorii | 20 | Stamford „ | 317 | | |
| Bordarii | 3737 | Terchesey „ | 102 | | |
| Molindini | 414 | Moldarii | 76 | Silvæ | 252 |
| Ecclesiæ | 226 | Salinæ | 361 | Piscarii | 211 |
| | | Other persons | 260 | | |

MIDDLESEX. [2289.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 23 | Bordarii | 367 | Servi | 112 |
| Tenentes | 106 | Cotarii | 442 | Stanes burg. | 46 |
| | | Villani | 1124 | | |
| | | Molini | 34 | Silvæ | 35 |

NORFOLK (*Nordfolc*). [28,365.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 62 | Burg. Norwich | 883 |
| Sochmanni | 5521 | Others there | 68 |
| Liberi homines | 4981 | Bordarii there | 480 |
| Bordarii | 8679 | Burg. Yarmouth | 70 |
| Villani | 4528 | Thetford | 725 |
| Servi | 1066 | | |

Molini 403 Silvæ 180 Ecclesiæ 159 Piscatores 72
Salinæ 240 Vara, or Custodes apium 187 Other persons 61

BOOK VIII.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE (*Northantscire*). [8665.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 62 | Bordarii | 2011 | Burg. North | 295 |
| Tenentes | 125 | Villani | 3901 | Presbyters | 55 |
| Sochmanni | 915 | Servi | 879 | Milites | 50 |
| Molini | 249 | Silvæ | 112 | Other persons | 11 |

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE (*Snotinghamscire*). [6490.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 28 | Sochmanni | 1565 | Burgh. Nottingham | 363 |
| Taini | 26 | Bordarii | 1099 | Derby | 243 |
| Tenentes | 201 | Villani | 2555 | Others | 56 |
| Censorii | 2 | Servi | 26 | | |
| Molini | 118 | Presbyters | 63 | | |
| | | Silvæ | 69 | Piscatores | 32 |
| | | Other persons | 44 | | |

OXFORDSHIRE. [7461.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 77 | Villani | 3525 | Houses in Oxford, | 721 |
| Bordarii | 1838 | Servi | 938 | Other persons | 80 |
| Piscatores | 38 | Molini | 170 | Silvæ | 41 |
| | | Pasturæ | 32 | Salina | 1 |

RUTLANDSHIRE. [833.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sochmanni | 2 | Bordarii | 109 | Villani | 722 |

SHROPSHIRE (*Sciropescire*). [5344.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 9 | Coliberti | 13 | Servi | 991 |
| Tenentes | 98 | Bordarii | 1118 | Presbyters | 54 |
| Radmanni | 173 | Cotarii | 24 | Burgenses | 191 |
| Radchenistri | 3 | Cosces | 5 | Walenses | 64 |
| Molini | 88 | Villani | 1726 | Bovarii | 388 |
| | | Silvæ | 69 | Piscatores | 31 |
| | | Salinæ | 6 | Other persons | 193 |

SOMERSETSHIRE (*Summersete*). [12,819.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 46 | Coliberti | 156 | Burg. Tautone | 64 |
| King's thanes | 17 | Cotarii | 299 | Lanperth | 39 |
| Other proprietors | 11 | Bordarii | 4377 | Alsebruge | 32 |
| Subordinate Tenents | 205 | Cosces | 43 | Givelcestre | 108 |
| Gablatores | 7 | Villani | 4947 | Meleburn | 61 |
| Piscarii | 21 | Servi | 1565 | Bremet | 17 |
| | | Burgenses | | Bristow | 10 |
| | | Bath, Bade | 30 | Mansuræ | 22 |
| | | Porcarii | 57 | Molini | 323 |
| | | Pasturæ | 156 | Silvæ | 206 |

STAFFORDSHIRE (*Statfordscire*). [3498.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 16 | Villani | 1758 |
| King's thanes | 18 | Servi | 230 |
| Liberi homines | 20 | Presbyters | 22 |
| Subordinate Tenents | 84 | Milites | 5 |
| Bordarii | 897 | Burgenses | 217 |

Molini 62 Silvæ 143 Piscarii 2
Other persons 24

SUFFOLK (*Sudfulc*). [22,093.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 72 | Villani | 3024 |
| Sochmanni | 1014 | Servi | 947 |
| Liberi homines | 8012 | Burgenses | 1924 |
| Bordarii | 6292 | | |

Silvæ 152 Molendini 220 Ecclesiæ 358
Piscatores 60 Salinæ 18

SURREY (*Sudrie*). [4547.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 40 | Villani | 2327 |
| Sochmanni | 9 | Servi | 469 |
| Lib. homines | 4 | Milites | 6 |
| Bordarii | 921 | Burg. Gildeford | 175 |
| Cotarii | 288 | | |

Molini 121 Ecclesiæ 62 Silvæ 86
Piscarii 16 Porcarii and others 23

SUSSEX (*Sudsexe*). [11,718.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tenentes | 753 | Propositus manerii | 1 |
| Bordarii | 2510 | Berquatii | 10 |
| Cotarii | 738 | Presbyteri | 3 |
| Villani | 5866 | Oppidani and | |
| Servi | 415 | burgenses | 830 |

Hagæ 26 Salinæ 285 Molini 148
Piscariæ 30 Ecclesiæ 103

WARWICKSHIRE (*Warwicscire*). [6941.]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | | Francigenæ | 15 |
| and thanes | 43 | Milites | 24 |
| Liberi homines | 20 | Presbyters | 59 |
| Tenentes | 109 | Burgenses of | |
| Bordarii | 1705 | Warwick | 398 |
| Villani | 3537 | Tamewerd | 10 |
| Servi | 726 | | |

Silvæ 110 Molini 121 Salinæ 3
Other persons 61

BOOK VIII.

WILTSHIRE (*Wiltescire*). [10,749.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 66 | | Cotarii | | 284 |
| Coliberti | 252 | | Villani | | 3290 |
| Bordarii | 2713 | | Servi | | 1475 |
| Cosces | 1385 | | Burgenses | | 371 |
| Molini 404 | Porcarii 87 | | Pasturæ | | 206 |
| Silvæ 143 | Ecclesiæ 29 | | Other persons | | 44 |

WORCESTERSHIRE (*Wirecestrescire*). [4916.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 27 | | Cotmanni | | 19 |
| Radchenistri | 2 | | Villani | | 1524 |
| Radmanni | 52 | | Servi | | 813 |
| Coliberti | 9 | | Francigenæ | | 23 |
| Bordarii | 1725 | | Presbyters | | 21 |
| Cotarii | 39 | | Burgenses | | 242 |
| Bovarii 65 | Molini 107 | | Silvæ 87 | | |
| Salinæ 50 | Piscarii 18 | | Other persons 93 | | |

YORKSHIRE (*Euruicscire*). [9968.]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chief proprietors | 65 | | Coteri | | 16 |
| Tenentes, about | 200 | | Villani | | 5061 |
| Censores | 36 | | Presbyters | | 130 |
| Sochmanni | 438 | | Burg. of York | | 1716 |
| Bordarii | 1842 | | Other burghers | | 110 |
| Molini 103 | Silvæ 122 | | Piscarii 61 | | |
| Other persons 68 | | | | | |

General total 300,785.

DANISH COUNTIES.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Norfolk | 28,365 | Essex | 14,549 |
| Lincolnshire | 25,819 | Yorkshire | 9,968 |
| Suffolk | 22,093 | | |
| | | | 100,794 |

OTHER COUNTIES PLACED ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Devonshire | 18,205 | Berkshire | 6,737 |
| Kent | 14,866 | Leicestershire | 6,613 |
| Somerset | 12,819 | Nottinghamshire | 6,490 |
| Sussex | 11,718 | Cornwall | 5,606 |
| Wilts | 10,749 | Buckinghamshire | 5,563 |
| Hampshire | 10,631 | Herefordshire | 5,510 |
| Dorset | 8,879 | Cambridgeshire | 5,506 |
| Northamptonshire | 8,665 | Shropshire | 5,344 |
| Gloucestershire | 8,365 | Herts | 4,924 |
| Oxfordshire | 7,461 | Worcestershire | 4,916 |
| Warwickshire | 6,941 | Surrey | 4,547 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bedfordshire | 3,772 | Huntingdon | 2,511 |
| Staffordshire | 3,498 | Middlesex | 2,289 |
| Derbyshire | 3,140 | Rutland | 833 |
| Cheshire | 2,873 | | |
| | | | 199,991 |

TOTAL.

| | |
|---|---|
| Danish counties - - - - - - | 100,794 |
| The others - - - - - - - | 199,991 |
| Persons mentioned in Domesday-book[1] - - | 300,785 |

These may be considered as so many families, and if we take five as the general average of a family for all the counties, it would make the Anglo-Saxon population actually alluded to, at the time of the Conquest, 1,504,925, or a million and a half: but this enumeration was made after the destructive wars between William and the English[2], and after his dreadful devastation of Yorkshire, which left one hundred miles of the country, north of the Humber, a mere desert[3]; hence the number of that county is so small. Four counties are also entirely omitted; as Cumberland, Durham, Lancaster, and Northumberland.[4] But London, a century afterwards, is stated to have furnished sixty thousand fighting men[5]; therefore its population cannot have then been less than three hundred thousand persons. In Domesday-book it is also obvious that all the burghers, or

[1] I have taken the numbers for Hampshire and Sussex from Mr. Rickman's enumeration; and have, in all the rest, assumed, as he has done in these, a man for every silva, molinum, pastura, domus, &c. that is mentioned.

[2] The effects of these wars appear frequently in Domesday. Thus in the county of Dorset, it is said that in Dorchester *were*, in the time of the Confessor, 172 houses, but that 100 had been entirely destroyed; so in Wareham 143, of which 73 were "penitus destructæ;" so in Shaftesbury 38 out of 104, p. 75. So in Oxford, though 243 houses paid gold, yet 478 had become so "vastæ" as to yield none. In Ipswich 328 were "vastatæ." In York 540 are noticed as "vacuæ." Many such occur in other counties.

[3] See Turner's Hist. Eng. Middle Ages, vol. i. chap. iv. p. 102.

[4] These were the border counties, the seat of almost continual warfare; and part of them were then in the power of Malcolm, the king of Scotland, especially Cumberland and Durham.

[5] See Stephanides's Life of Becket.

BOOK VIII.

actual inhabitants of the cities and burghs, are not mentioned. When Canterbury was burnt by the Danes in 1006, it contained eight thousand men, of whom only eighty-four survived the ruin. Only one thousand six hundred are mentioned in Domesday-book eighty years afterwards, though a city so venerated and celebrated must have recovered its prosperity. But in other cities and towns it is manifest that almost all the residents are omitted; as in Bristol, where only ten are noticed, though this was at that time a great trading city; only seventy at Yarmouth; fifty-two only at Buckingham; nine only at Bedford; five at Sudbury; seventy at Hereford; forty-two at Dover; and but forty-six at St. Alban's, though a place peculiarly frequented and respected. Winchester, though then a large town, is not mentioned.

All the monks, and nearly all the parochial clergy, are omitted.[6] So in the different counties, it will be found that, excepting in the Danish counties, and in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire, which they also pervaded, very few of the actual freemen are enumerated. It would seem as if those persons were chiefly, if not only, recorded whose lands and tenements rendered some payments or services to the crown or state, or had been supposed to do so. Hence there is a careful enumeration of the extent of the lands and of the cultivators which had to defend themselves; that is, to contribute to the military force of the country in the proportions alluded to, but little more than this is attended to; and though this contribution was a very general obligation on the landed property of the country, yet the charters show us that some parts were exempt from it. If we take all these things into consideration, we shall perceive that the Anglo-

[6] We may infer the extent of the omission as to the parochial clergy from recollecting that the parish churches in England, in the middle ages, were stated to be 46,822.

Saxon population, in the period just before the Norman conquest, must have exceeded TWO MILLIONS.

This enumeration intimates to us the political benefits which resulted from the invasions of the Northmen. They appear to have planted in the colonies they occupied a numerous race of freemen; and their counties seem to have been well peopled. Thus,

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| In | Essex | 343 sochmanni. |
| | | 306 liberi homines. |
| | Leicestershire | 1716 sochmanni. |
| | Lincolnshire | 11,322 sochmanni. |
| | Nottinghamshire | 1565 sochmanni. |
| | Norfolk | 5521 sochmanni. |
| | | 4981 lib. hom. |
| | Suffolk | 8012 lib. hom. |
| | | 1014 sochmanni. |
| | York | 438 sochmanni. |

This enumeration of the population shows how large a proportion of Englishmen were then in the servile state; for that villani were in a state of bondage is manifest from the manner in which they are mentioned in our ancient Glanville[7], Bracton, and Fleta[8], who say that even holding a freehold does not give liberty to a villanus; a remark not observed by those who have deemed villani free peasants, because they were found to have lands. The bordarii, servi, cotarii, cosces, &c. were similarly circumstanced. In Domesday-book, burghers are mentioned as having bordarii under them. There can be no doubt that nearly three-fourths of the Anglo-Saxon population were in a state of slavery; and nothing could have broken the powerful chains of law and force by which the landed aristocracy held their people in bondage, but such events as the Norman conquest, and the civil wars which it excited and fostered, and in which such numbers of the nobility perished; and also that wise and humane law which directed that if a slave

[7] P. 74.

[8] P. 1. and 3.

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was not claimed by his lord within a limited period, he should be presumed to be free. It was perhaps as much by the destruction of the Anglo-Saxon great proprietors as by Northman colonists near the Baltic, that the number of the free were so numerous in the districts where the Danes had predominated.[9]

[9] Since I made the preceding enumeration, I have observed that Sir William Petty says "there were about two millions at the Norman Conquest, of which consult the Domesday-book." Essays on Polit. Arith. p. 15. ed. 1755. So that our computations, both made independent of each other, remarkably coincide.

# BOOK IX.

*Their* POETRY, LITERATURE, ARTS, *and* SCIENCES.

## CHAP. I.

*Their Native or Vernacular Poetry.*

CHAP. I.

As poetry has been always classed among the most interesting productions of the human mind, few topics of human research are more curious than the history of this elegant art, from its rude beginning to that degree of excellence to which it has long been raised by our ingenious countrymen. In every nation it is the child of feeling; but different emotions of an intellectual sensibility prevail in different ages and states of society. Where the adoration of the Creator predominates, as in Judea, the poetical composition takes the form of the loftiest sentiments of religion. Where war and battle chiefly agitate, as among the Northmen and the ancient Britons, the Scalld and Bard chiefly sing of conflict and slaughter, and the triumph of victory. Where the fair sex have become objects of love, competition, and respect, the tender affections impel and dictate the imploring, the praising, or the consolatory lay[1]; while elder and chastened ex-

[1] How early this feeling begins, even among rude tribes, the following instance of a New Zealander's song will indicate.

The New Zealanders are at present (1827) in a state very like that of the Anglo-Saxons when they visited England, and display much of the same mixture of active mind, high spirit, fearless boldness, unfeeling cruelty, and barbaric ignorance which distinguished our ancestors. Some of them even appear to have been cannibals, and yet one of their milder spirits can thus express himself: —

"The boisterous north wind so deeply pierced my life for thee, O Taiwa! that I ascended the mountain, even to the very top, to witness thy departure. The rolling billows extend nearly as far as Taiwa went. Thou art driven to the eastward far away: But thou hast given me a garment to wear for thy sake, and happy

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perience, even in barbaric times and nations, pour out the treasures of their moral judgment and admonitory wisdom in the useful effusions of their didactic muse. The Anglo-Saxon remains exhibit specimens of at least three of these four classes of the Heliconian inspiration; but it must be confessed, that if they revered or loved their fairer companions, they have rarely alluded to them in their metrical recollections; they incidentally speak of them with strong epithets of admiration, but have not devoted to them any specific tribute of an affectionate heart.

In no country can the progress of the poetical genius and taste be more satisfactorily traced than in our own. During that period which this work attempts to commemorate, we find it in its earliest state. It could, indeed, have been scarcely more rude to have been at all discernible. But though its dress was homely, and its features coarse, yet it was preparing to assume the style, the measures, and the subjects, which in subsequent ages were so happily displayed as to deserve the notice of the latest posterity.

The poetry of the Anglo-Saxons was written in two languages, and therefore was of two genera; the poems which they composed in their own tongue, and the poems which they wrote in Latin. These two kinds of poetry were completely distinct from each other;—distinct in origin; distinct in style.

shall I be in the remembrance of thee when I bind it on my shoulders. When thou art arrived at thy intended port, my affections will be there."

That the reader may compare their mode of versification with the Anglo-Saxon, we add the original, which displays the great superiority of the New Zealand language in its verbal euphony, from the greater abundance of its vowel sounds.

E táka to e áu ki te tíu marángai,
I wiua mai ai e kóinga du anga,
Tai ráwa nei ki te púke ki ére átu,
E táta te wiunga te tai ki a Taiwa.
Ki á koe e taua, ka wiua, ki te tónga
Náu i ó mai e káhu, e tíouki,
E takówe e ó mo toku nei rángi,
Ka tai ki reira, áku rángi auraki."

New Zeal. Gram. 107.

CHAP. I.

Their native poetry.

The Anglo-Saxon native poetry may be distinguished into its mind and its style.

In the mind of poetry we look for its imagination, its feeling, and its force of thought; but these in all ages obey and display the tastes, sentiment, and habits of the passing day. In the Anglo-Saxon times, though women were highly respected and valued, yet that cultivated feeling which we call love, in its intellectual tenderness and finer sympathies, was neither predominant nor probably known. The stern and active passions were the rulers of society, and all the amusements were gross or severe. Women were reverenced, but not loved; and hence, except in the little effusions which have been noticed of our self-cultivated Alfred, there is no affectionate allusion to the fair sex in any Anglo-Saxon poem.

War and religion were the absorbing subjects of this period, and all the imagination, and feeling, and thought which exist in the Anglo-Saxon poetry are connected with one or both of these topics. There can be no poetry without imagination and feeling; but these endeared qualities appear in different nations, and in different states of society, in very dissimilar forms.

In the Anglo-Saxon poetry they took the peculiar shape of the metaphor and the periphrasis. The imagination exerted itself in framing those abrupt and imperfect hints or fragments of similes which we call metaphors: and the feeling expressed its emotions by that redundant repetition of phrases, which, though it added little to the meaning of the poet's lay, was yet the emphatic effusion of his heart, and excited consenting sympathies in those to whom it was addressed. This habit of paraphrasing the sentiment is the great peculiarity of the mind of the Anglo-Saxon poetry; the metaphor may be frequently observed, but the periphrasis is never long absent.

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The style of their poetry was as peculiar. It has been much disputed by what rules or laws the Saxons arranged their poetical phrases. I have observed a passage in the general works of Bede which may end the controversy, by showing that they used no rules at all, but adopted the simpler principle of consulting only the natural love of melody, of which the human organs of hearing have been made susceptible; and of using that easy allocation of syllables which pleased the musical ear. In defining rhythmus, Bede says:

"It is a modulated composition of words, not according to the laws of metre, but *adapted in the number of its syllables to the judgment of the ear*, as are the verses of our vulgar (or native) poets. Rhythm may exist without metre, but there cannot be metre without rhythm, which is thus more clearly defined.

"Metre is an artificial rule with modulation; rhythmus is the modulation without the rule. Yet, for the most part, you may find, by a sort of chance, some rule in rhythm: but this is not from an artificial government of the syllables. It arises because the sound and the modulation lead to it. The vulgar poets effect this rustically; the skilful attain it by their skill. Thus that celebrated hymn is very beautifully made like iambic metre:

Rex eterne! Domine!
Rerum Creator omnium!
Qui eras ante secula!

"Such are other Ambrosian poems, and those not a few. So they sing the hymn on the day of judgment, made alphabetically, in the form of the trochaic metre.

Apparebit repentina dies
Magna Domini, fur obscurâ
Velut nocte, improvisos occupans."[2]

From this passage it is obvious that Bede's poetical countrymen wrote their vernacular verses without any other rule than that of pleasing the ear. To such a selection and arrangement of words as produced this effect, they added the habit of frequently omitting the usual particles, and of conveying their meaning in short and contracted phrases. The only artifices they used were those of inversion and transition.

[2] Bedæ Op. vol. i. p. 57. Ed. 1563. Bede's hymn De Ratione Temporum is all in rhyme in twenty-nine couplets, or fifty-eight lines. Ibid. p. 475.

CHAP. I.

Their periphrasis.

The most ancient piece of Anglo-Saxon poetry which we possess, is that fragment of the song of the ancient Cædmon which Alfred has inserted in his translation of Bede. Cædmon was a monk, who accustomed himself to religious poetry, which he began late in life. He died in 680.

The fragment, which has descended to us, he made on waking in a stall of oxen which he was appointed to guard during the night.[3] The original shows the rhythm to which Bede alludes:

| | |
|---|---|
| Now we should praise | Nu pe ſceolan hepiġean |
| The Guardian of the heavenly kingdom; | Þeaꝑon þiceſ þeaꝑþ; |
| The mighty Creator, | Ꝑeꝑoþeſ mihte, |
| And the thoughts of his mind, | Ꝛnþ hiſ moþ ġeþanc, |
| Glorious Father of his works! | Weoꝑc ꝑulþoꝑ ꝑæþeꝑ! |
| As he, of every glory | Sꝑa he ꝑulþneſ ġehpæſ |
| Eternal Lord! | Ꝿce þꝑihten! |
| Established the beginning; | Oꝑþ onſtealde; |
| So he first shaped | Þe æreſt ġeſcop |
| The earth for the children of men, | Ꝿoꝑthan beaꝑnum, |
| And the heav'ns for its canopy. | Þeoꝑon to ꝑoꝑe. |
| Holy Creator! | Þalıġ ſcÿppenþ! |
| The middle region, | Tha miþþan ġeaꝑþ, |
| The Guardian of Mankind, | Ꝛon cÿnneſ þeaꝑþ, |
| The eternal Lord, | Ꝿce þꝑihtne, |
| Afterwards made | Æftep teoþe |
| The ground for men. | Fiꝑum ꝑolþan; |
| Almighty Ruler! | Fꝑea almıtıġ! |

*Alfred's Bede*, 597.

In these eighteen lines the verbal rhythm and periphrasis of the style are evident. Eight lines are occupied by so many phrases to express the Deity. These repetitions are very abruptly introduced; sometimes they come in like so many interjections:

The Guardian of the heavenly kingdom;
The mighty Creator—
Glorious Father of his works;—
Eternal Lord!—
Holy Creator!
The Guardian of Mankind,
The Eternal Lord—
Almighty Ruler!

[3] Bede, iv. 24. Alfred has preserved the Saxon.

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Three more of the lines are used for the periphrasis of the first making the world:

He established the beginning;
He first shaped —
He afterwards made.

Three more lines are employed to express the earth as often by a periphrasis:

The earth for the children of men —
The middle region —
The ground for men.

So that of eighteen lines, the periphrasis occupies fourteen, and in so many lines only conveys three ideas; and all that the eighteen lines express is simply the first verse of the book of Genesis, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

No Saxon poem can be inspected without the periphrasis being found to be the leading characteristic. The elegant Menology in the Cotton Library displays it in its very beginning. The rhythm in the placing of the syllables is also apparent:

| | |
|---|---|
| Cpiſt pæſ acennýð | Christ was born |
| Cýninga pulðor | the King of Glory |
| On miðne pintep: | in mid-winter: |
| Mæpe þeoðen! | Illustrious King! |
| Ece ælmihtig! | Eternal! almighty! |
| On þy eahteoðan dæg | On the eighth day |
| hælenð gehaten | he was called the Saviour, |
| Þeoſon picef peaſð. | Ruler of heaven's kingdom. |

As all the specimens of their native poetry which will be adduced in this chapter will be found to abound with periphrastical amplifications, it will be unnecessary to introduce more instances here.

Their metaphors.

Their periphrasis is always mingled with metaphors; and as these will be seen very frequently in the subsequent citations, they need not be particularised. One striking instance willsuffice, which we will take from Cædmon's periphrasis and metaphors to express the ark; he calls it successively, the ship, the sea-house,

the greatest of watery chambers, the ark, the great sea-house, the high mansion, the holy wood, the house, the great sea-chest, the greatest of treasure-houses, the vehicle, the mansion, the house of the deep, the palace of the ocean, the cave, the wooden fortress, the floor of the waves, the receptacle of Noah, the moving roof, the feasting-house, the bosom of the vessel, the nailed building, the ark of Noah, the vehicle of the ark, the happiest mansion, the building of the waves, the foaming ship, the happy receptacle.[4]

Their omission of particles.

Another prevailing feature of the Anglo-Saxon poetry was the omission of the little particles of speech, those abbreviations of language which are the invention of man in the more cultivated ages of society, and which contribute to express our meaning more discriminatingly, and to make it more clearly understood. The prose and poetry of Alfred's translation of Boethius will enable us to illustrate this remark. Where the prose says, Ðu ðe on ðam ecan ȝeðle ƿicaȝð, "Thou who on the eternal seat reignest," the poetry of the same passage, Ðu on heahȝeðle ecan ƿicaȝð, "Thou on high seat eternal reignest," omitting the explaining and connecting particles, *the* and *that*. So, "Thou that on the seat," is again in the poetry, "Thou on seat." The Saxon of the little fragment of Cædmon is without particles.

Whoever looks into Anglo-Saxon poetry, after being familiar with their prose, will perceive how uniformly barren their poems are of the discriminating and explanatory particles. He will likewise feel, in the difficulties which attend his construction of it, how much obscurity is created by their absence.

[4] The scallds or bards of the Baltic were fond of these creations of their poetical talent, as the following specimens from their odes will show. Waves, the daughters of the sea; spider, the king of weavers; dust, the smoke of horses. V. 153, 4. Ships, the winged horses; the asses of the ocean; horses, the ships of the earth. R. L. 58. 97. 177. A ship, the horse of the sea daubed with pitch; a cup, a ship of ale; head, the seat of the sounding teeth; women, the fair swans of Bellona. G. S. 137. 147. 151. 160. Hail, the stones of the clouds; women, a fine country adorned with linen of gold. B. 254. Some are still more violent.

BOOK IX.

Their short phrases.

In prose, and in cultivated poetry, every conception of the author is clearly expressed and fully made out. In barbaric poetry, and in the Anglo-Saxon poetry, we have most commonly abrupt, imperfect hints, instead of regular description or narration. The poetical citations which follow, will abundantly show this. But that their poetry seeks to express the same idea in fewer words than prose, may be made apparent by one instance. Thus, the phrase in Alfred's prose, "So doth the moon with his pale light, that the bright stars he obscures in the heavens," is put by him in his poetry thus:

With pale light
Bright stars
Moon lesseneth.

Even when the same idea is multiplied by the periphrasis, the rest of the sentence is not extended either in meaning or expression. One word or epithet is played upon by a repetition of synonymous expressions, but the meaning of the sentence is not thereby increased.

Their inversions and transitions.

Of their artificial inversion of their words and phrases in their poems, every specimen adduced will give evidence. It is quite different in their prose. The words follow there most commonly in an easy and natural order. The poem on Beowulf will give repeated instances of their abrupt and unconnected transitions. Their metre will be the subject of a separate chapter.

The poetry which pleases a refined age, has no more similarity to such poetry as we find to have been popular among the Anglo-Saxons, than the sonatas of Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven, can be supposed to have to the boisterous music of our ancestors. Poetry, like painting and architecture, has attained to its perfection by slow degrees. The leaves of its laurel seem to have been the gradual contributions of genius

and labour during many centuries. But at the period in which it is the province of this history to contemplate it, little else seems to have been done than the formation of a style of composition different from prose. If we call this style poetry, it is rather by complaisance than truth — rather with a knowlege of the excellences afterwards introduced into it, than of those which it then possessed.

The barren and peculiar state of the Anglo-Saxon poetry leads us to infer, that it was the product of art more than of nature. Its origin seems to have been as homely as its genius.

The origin of the periphrasis is easily accounted for; a favourite chief or hero conquers, and is received on his return by the clamorous rejoicings of his people. One calls him brave; another, fierce; another, irresistible. He is pleased with the praises; and some one at his feast, full of the popular feeling, repeats the various epithets with which he had been greeted :

> Edmund,
> the brave chief,
> fierce in war!
> irresistible in battle!
> slaughtered his enemies
> at ————————.

This is in substance an Anglo-Saxon poem.

But when these addresses were found to interest the vanity of the chiefs, and to excite their liberality, more labour would be bestowed in the construction of the periphrasis; the compliment would be sometimes higher seasoned, and then the periphrasis would be raised into occasional metaphors: the hero would be called, the eagle of battle, the lord of shields, the giver of the bracelet, the helmet of his people; and the lady would be saluted as a beautiful elf.

The style of the Anglo-Saxon poetry seems to have

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been originally the common, imperfect language of the people, in its half-formed and barbarous state. When an infant first begins to talk, it uses only the nouns and pronouns of its language. By degrees it learns the use of a few verbs, which for some time it uses in their simplest forms, without any of their conjugations. The meaning of these is supplied by its actions, or is left to be guessed by its parent. The knowlege of the abbreviations, or the particles of language, is gradually attained. With our careful education, children acquire from us the habit of using them with fluency and correctness in a few years. But wild nations must have been some centuries without them.

All nations, who have formed their languages, have gone through the same process, in doing so, that our children are always exhibiting. The nouns, or the names of things, are at first their only language. Some of these, which signify visible action or motion, come at last to be used to express motion or action generally, or are added to other nouns, to express them in a state of action. These are what we now call verbs. Hence nouns, nouns used as verbs, or thus converted into verbs, and others made pronouns, compose the whole of the language in the ruder ages of every uncivilised nation.

As the progress of society goes on, the abbreviations of language begin to be formed; words multiply, and the forms of using them to distinguish the various ideas of the human mind from each other, and to give determination and precision to its meaning, begin also to multiply. The conjugations of the verbs, and the declensions of nouns, are then invented, new sets of nouns receive being, and new meanings are given to the primitive nouns, as will be shown in our chapter on language, till at length every language receives that multiplicity of terms and particles which form

the copious and clear stream of expressive and cultivated prose. If a people narrate a tale in the full and copious period of their language, they will do it naturally in that easy and loquacious prose which forms the style of Herodotus, the oldest prose writer of Greece that has survived to us. But if the same tale was told by the ancestors of this people in their ruder state, when language had not acquired its abbreviations, nor the verbs their conjugations, nor the nouns their secondary meanings and derivative applications; and if that tale, so rudely told, were handed down faithfully by tradition in its rude state to the cultivated age, it would probably exhibit all the features of the Anglo-Saxon poetry;—it would be without particles, without conjugations or declensions, with great contraction of phrase, with abrupt transitions, with violent metaphor and frequent periphrasis. The contraction of phrase, would arise from the penury of their associations. The same poverty of mind and knowlege would make the periphrasis, or the retracing the same idea again and again, their easiest source of eloquence; and the violence of metaphor naturally arises from not having immediately new terms to express the new, or more intellectual ideas, that would every year be rising among an improving people; and, therefore, till new words are devised, the old names of real things are necessarily, though violently applied.

The metre of the Saxon poetry is the simplest that can be conceived, and is, indeed, often little else than a series of short exclamations. Its inversions are more artificial. But when music was applied to poetry, and men found it beneficial to sing or recite a chieftain's praise, we may conceive, that, to secure to themselves the profits of the profession, some little ingenuity was exerted to make difficulties which would raise their style above the vulgar phrase. Its in-

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version was one of the easiest modes of making a peculiar style of composition; and as society advanced in its attainments, the transition, the alliteration, and other ornaments, may have been added, either as new beauties or as new difficulties.

When the style of the nation had been improved into an easy and accurate prose, the ancient style may have been kept on foot by the bards of the chiefs from design, and by the people from habit and veneration. The old style would be long remembered by a nation, from respect to its ancestors, from that venerable air which it has from its antiquity, like the dialect and stanza of Spenser to us, which is always pleasing, and often imitated; and from the fact, that the ancient compositions which had become popular were in the ancient style.

Hence, independent of the interest which the bards would have to use the ancient style, because, by becoming more unlike the improving language of the improving people, it would remain more securely appropriated to them, and therefore more beneficial; the people, from habit and association, would also prefer it.

Thus humbly, it is conceived, the Anglo-Saxon poetry arose: at first the rude exclamations of a rude people, with a rude language, greeting their chieftains; soon repeated or imitated by some men, from the profit derived from it. When, from the improvement of the manners and state of the people, a more cultivated style, or that we call prose, became general, because better fitted to the uses of life, then the old rude style dropped out of common use. The bards, however, retained, and appropriated this, because more instrumental to their professional advantages. To enjoy these more exclusively, to secure their monopoly of credit and gifts, they added more difficulties to the style they adopted, to make it more

remote from the vulgar attainment; till at length their poetical style became for ever separated from prose.

In thus considering our ancient poetry as an artificial and mechanical thing, cultivated by men chiefly as a trade, we must not be considered as confounding it with those delightful beauties which we now call poetry. These have arisen from a different source, and are of a much later chronology. They are the creations of subsequent genius; but they have sprung up, not in its dark and ancient days, but in a succession of better times, during the many ages which followed, in which the general intellect of society being continually improving, taste and imagination improved also. The English fancy was cultivated with assiduous labour for many centuries before Chaucer arose, or could have arisen. True poetry is the offspring of cultivated mind. Art cannot produce it without nature, but neither can nature make it where art is wholly unknown. Hence, all that we owe to our Anglo-Saxon ancestors in poetry is, that, by accident or design, they perpetuated a style of composition different from the common language of the country, which gradually became appropriated to fancy and music. In happier times, genius, using it as the vehicle of its effusions, improved it by slow degrees, and enriched it with ever-succeeding beauties, till that rich stock of poetry has been created, which is the pride of our literature and country.

The Anglo-Saxon poetry, as it is earlier, so it is also inferior to the Northern in depth of feeling, in vigour of genius, and in culture of imagination. It occupies a middle space between the ancient British poetry and the Northern. It has not the story, nor the strong imagination of the Northern.

It exhibits chiefly feeling, but it is vague feeling, or feeling vaguely expressed, not made out, not com-

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municated by expressions or images adapted to excite it in others. It is strong heroic feeling in the mind of the writer, but more expressed by violent words than by the real effusion or detail of the genuine emotion.

But, in truth, society had then not acquired a phrase of eloquent passion for its own use. It felt often strongly; but, like the uncultivated mind of all ages, did not know how to express itself. Hence the use, and the cause of the use, of oaths and imprecations, violent gesticulations and abuse. The strong feeling is expressed by them because the utterers have not yet attained the art or the habit of using any other form of diction to express their feelings by, and know no other way of giving them utterance.

Alfred, by translating the poetry of Boethius, did more to improve Saxon poetry than any other thing; but this kind was too intellectual to be then imitated by his uneducated contemporaries. He would have done them more service if he had translated Virgil or Homer, or any other epic poem into Saxon. The story would have caught their attention, and the descriptions and dialogues have been more level to their comprehension. The warlike story of Homer would have suited them; but Homer was out of the reach of Alfred, and perhaps Virgil's Eneid might have been too refined and sentimental.

The history of the Saxon poetry, and, indeed, of all modern European poetry, in its ruder state, may be divided into three heads: songs, or ballads; the lengthened narrative poems, or romances; and that miscellaneous kind which, if we term it lyric, it is more for the convenience of using a short generic word, than for the exact appropriation of its meaning. Under these three divisions shall be arranged all that can be collected on the Saxon poetry.

That our ancestors had popular songs on the actions

CHAP. I.

The Saxon Ballads.

of their great or favourite characters, or on such other subjects as interested the vulgar mind, is proved by many instances which may be traced in the ancient writers. Aldhelm, whose Latin poetry will be noticed, applied himself to compose songs, or ballads, in the Anglo-Saxon language, to instruct, as well as to amuse, his countrymen. Alfred inserted it as a remark in his Manual, that no one had ever appeared before Aldhelm so competent in English poetry; none had been able to compose so much, or to sing and recite it so appositely. The king mentions a popular ballad of Aldhelm's, which was in his time (that is, nearly two centuries afterwards) sung in the streets. Malmsbury adds, that Aldhelm, anxious to instruct his countrymen, then semi-barbarous, and inattentive to their religious duties, took his station on the public bridge, as if a singer by profession, and, by mixing sacred with lighter topics, won their attention, and meliorated their minds.

None of Aldhelm's vernacular poetry has survived; but the circumstance above mentioned, that he composed and sang these ballads as if "he professed the art of singing[5]," show that the harpers of the day were accustomed to recite them. That such things were then in general circulation is also implied by Bede, when he mentions, that in a festive company the harp was sent round, that those might sing who could.[6]

It was a book of Saxon poems which first allured Alfred to learn to read[7]; and the fact, that he had his children taught to read Saxon poems[8], and that he himself visited the Danish camp as a harper[9], which, in the reign of his grandson, Anlaf imitated[10], prove the existence of popular songs, which interested both the child and the rude warrior.

[5] Malmsb. 3 Gale, 339.
[6] Bede, lib. iv. c. 24.
[7] Asser.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Malmsb. 43.
[10] Ibid. 48.

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These songs, or ballads, are also mentioned on other occasions. When Malmsbury, after narrating the reign of Athelstan, proceeds to describe his origin from Edward's amour with a shepherd's daughter, he says, "The following facts I have taken rather from the songs (cantilenis) worn out by the course of time, than from books composed for the instruction of posterity." [11]

When Malmsbury has to mention the adulteries of Edgar, he endeavours to lessen their historical authority by saying, "The other infamies which I shall mention have been rather diffused by songs" (cantilenæ).[12]

These popular songs occur to us again in the ancient life of Dunstan. He is there said to have learnt "the vain songs of his nation." [13] He was also at that time a player upon the harp.

A fragment of a ballad composed by Canute the Great has survived to us[14], which gives us a specimen of the measure which this kind of poetry had attained in his time. As he was sailing by the abbey in the Isle of Ely, he heard the monks chanting their psalms and anthems, and was so struck with the interesting melody, that he composed a little Saxon ballad on the occasion, which began thus:

Merie ſungen ðe munecheſ binnen Elý,
Tha Cnut chinġ reuðeþ bý;
Roweð, Cnihteſ, noer ðe lanð,
Anð herie we ðeſ munecheſ ſanġ

Merry sang the monks in Ely,
When Canute the king was sailing by;
"Row, ye Knights, near the land,
"And let us hear these monks' song."

The historical ballads of the Saxons on the actions of their popular favourites are also intimated by Ingulf, the Conqueror's secretary. In his account of

[11] Malmsb. 52.
[12] Ibid. 56.
[13] MS Cleop. B. 13.
[14] Hist. Elien — 3 Gale, 505.

the chivalric hero, Hereward, who flourished in the time of Edward the Confessor and afterwards, he says, "His brave actions were sung in England."[15] In another passage, the monk informs us that Hereward died at last in peace, and was buried in their monastery, "after great battles, and a thousand dangers, frequently dared against the king, earls, barons, and magistrates, and bravely achieved, as is yet sung in the streets."[16] We may close our authorities by stating, that William of Malmsbury mentions that the song (cantilena) of Roland was begun to be sung before the battle of Hastings to excite a martial spirit in the combatants.[17]

Two of the historical songs of our ancestors, and some fragments of others, have been preserved in the Saxon Chronicle, in which they have been inserted as part of the Chronicle. As one of the songs on Edgar's death has not been hitherto brought before the English public, and the other, on Ethelstan's victory, has been given with incorrect translations, I will add a version of both.[18]

*The Song on Ethelstan's Victory at Brunanburh.*

Here Athelstan king,
of earls the lord,
the giver of the bracelets of
the nobles,
and his brother also,
Edmund the ætheling,
the Elder a lasting glory
won by slaughter in battle
with the edges of swords
at Brunan burh.
The wall of shields they cleaved,
they hewed the noble banners:
with the rest of the family,
the children of Edward.
As to them it was natural
from their ancestry,
that they in the field often
against every enemy
their land should defend,
their treasures and homes.
Pursuing, they destroyed
the Scottish people
and the ship-fleet.
Dying they fell!

[15] Ingulf, p. 67. [16] Ibid. p. 68. [17] Malmsb. p. 101.

[18] Various MSS. give different readings of some passages of this poem, and several parts are obscure enough to prevent any one from giving now an indisputable translation of them. Mr. Price has added a new one with some ingenuity, but with only partial success, and with some doubtful conceptions. I have considered his version, Mr. Ingram's, Gibson's, and others, and have revised my own translation and made it what most satisfies my own judgment, but I feel that full certainty in every part is not now attainable.

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the field was coloured
with the warriors' blood!
After that the sun on high
in the morning hour,
the greatest star!
glided over the earth,
God's candle bright!
the eternal Lord's!
till the noble creature
hastened to her setting.
There lay soldiers many
with darts struck down,
Northern men,
over their shields shot.
So were the Scotch;
weary of ruddy battle.
The West Saxons then
throughout the day,
with a chosen band,
to the last pressed
on the loathed people.
They hewed the fugitives of the army,
the behind ones, fiercely
with swords sharpened at the mill.
The Mercians did not refuse
the hard hand-play
with any of those men
that, with Anlaf,
over the turbid sea,
in the bosom of the ship,
sought the land
for deadly fight.
Five lay
in that battle place,
young kings,
by swords quieted:
so also seven,
the earls of Anlaf,
and innumerable of the army
of the fleet—and the Scots.
There was chased away
the lord of the Northmen,
driven by necessity
to the stem of the ship,
with a small host.
The crew floated the ship;
the king departed out
on the yellow flood;
his life preserved.
So there also the routed one,
a fugitive, came
to his northern country;
Constantinus:
the hoary soldier of Hilda.
He needed not to triumph
in the commerce of swords:
he was the fragment of his relations;
of his friends felled in the folk-place,
slain in the battle:
And his son he left
on the place of slaughter
with wounds beaten down;
young in the conflict.
He could not glory
in the lad with flaxen hair,
from the biting of the bill;
old and deceitful.
Not more than Anlaf,
with the residue of their armies
had need to exult,
that they for works of battle
were better
in the place of combat,
in the prostration of the banners,
in the meeting of the arrows,
in the assembly of men,
in the exchange of weapons,
when they on the field of slaughter
against Edward's
descendants played.
Departed from them, then
the Northmen,
in nailed ships,
the dreary relics of the darts,
on the stormy sea,
over the deep water,
to seek Dublin,
and Ireland again,
disgraced in mind.
So the brothers
both together,
the king and the ætheling,
their country sought,
the West-Saxon land.
The screamers of war

they left behind;
the raven to enjoy,
the dismal kite,
and the black raven
with horned beak;
and the hoarse toad;
the eagle, afterwards
to feast on the white flesh;
the greedy battle-hawk,
and the grey beast,
the wolf in the wood.
Nor had there been a greater slaughter
in this island
ever yet
of people destroyed,
before this
by the edges of swords,
(This is what the books tell us
of the old wise men)
since from the East hither
the Angles and the Saxons
came up
over the broad waves,
and sought the Britons.
The illustrious smiths of war!
the Welsh overcame;
the earls excelling in honor!
and obtained the country.[19]

In this song we may observe this artless order: in the two first paragraphs, the actions of Athelstan and his brother are recited. The West Saxons and the Mercians are then separately praised. The fate of their enemies follows. The deaths of the five kings and seven earls are commemorated. Anlaf's flight and escape are sung, and Constantine's, whose son fell in the conflict. The poet then exults in the superior prowess of his countrymen. He conducts the remains of the defeated army to Dublin, and the victorious princes into West Saxony. He closes his song with two poetical common-places; one on the birds of prey, who crowd the field of battle, and the other on the superiority of this victory to all former ones.

The song on Edgar's death is much shorter:

Here ended
his earthly joys—
Edgar, England's king:
he chose for himself another light,
beautiful and pleasant;
and left this feeble life,
which the children of the nations,
the men on earth,
call so transitory.
On that month which every where
in this country's soil
they, that were before
in the art of numbers
rightly instructed,
call July;
in his youth departed
on the eighteenth day,

[19] Sax. Chron. Gib. 112. Ingr. 141.

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Edgar from life—
the giver of the bracelets of the nobles:
and his son took
afterwards to the kingdom;
a child not full grown;
the ruler of earls:
Edward was his name,
an excelling hero.
Ten nights before
from Britain departed
the bishop so good
in native mind,
Cyneward was his name.
Then was in Mercia,
to my knowlege,
wide and every where
the praise of the Supreme Governor
destroyed on the earth.
Many were disturbed
of God's skilful servants.
Then was much groaning
to those that in their breasts
carried the burning love
of their Creator in their mind.
Then was the source of miracles
so much despised,
the Governor of victory;
the Lawgiver of the sky;
when man broke his rights.
And then was also driven
the beloved man,
Oslac, from the earth,
over the rolling of the waves,
over the bath of the sea-fowl,
the long-haired hero,
wise, and in words discreet,
over the roaring of the waters,
over the country of the whales;
of an home deprived.
And then was shown
up in the sky
a star in the firmament.
This the firm of spirit,
the men of skilful mind,
call extensively
a comet by name,
men skilled in art,
wise truth-tellers.
There was over the nation
the vengeance of the Supreme.
Widely spread
hunger over the mountains.
That again Heaven's
Ruler removed;
the Lord of angels!
He again gave bliss
to every inhabitant
by the earth's fertility.[20]

These historical songs have none of the story, nor the striking traits of description which interest us in the ballads of a subsequent age. In the Saxon songs we see poetry in its rudest form, before the art of narration was understood. The simplicity of the ballad deceives us into a belief that is the easy and natural performance of the less cultivated ages of society. But the truth seems to be, that the excellence of the ballad is as difficult of attainment as any other species of approved poetry, and is the result not merely of genius, but also of great cultivation. In the ruder ages of nations, the ballad is the sort of poetry the most frequently composed and the most generally

[20] Sax. Ch. Gib. 122. Ing. 160.

recited. The incessant cultivation of this particular species creates at least an excellence in it which subsequent ages do not attain, because other departments of the Parnassian art are then attended to, and the ballad becomes less used.

The song of Canute on Ely was the composition of the eleventh century; and being much later written than that on Athelstan, and therefore of a more cultivated kind, seems to have approached nearer that lively and dramatic form which interests us so much in the ballads of the following ages. This little fragment is, indeed, the oldest specimen of the dramatic or genuine ballad which we have in the Anglo-Saxon language.

The genuine ballad seems to have originated when the old Saxon poetry began to decline. The laboured metaphor, the endless periphrasis, the violent inversion, and the abrupt transition, being the great features of the Saxon poetry, these constituted that pompousness which William of Malmsbury truly states to have been its great characteristic. But it was impossible that while these continued prevalent and popular, the genuine ballad could have appeared. The ballad, therefore, probably arose from more vulgar and homely poets—from men who could not bend language into that difficult and artificial strain which the genius of the Anglo-Saxon bard was educated to use. The ambulatory glee-men, who strove to please the public by their merry-andrew antics, were most probably the first inventors of the genuine ballad. While at one time they tumbled and danced, showed their bears, and frolicked before the people in the dresses of various animals, at others they may have told little tales to interest the mob, from whose liberality they drew their maintenance.

Incidents narrated in verse were more intelligible than the pompous songs of the regular poets, and far

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more interesting to the people. In time they gained admission to the hall and the palace; and, by the style of Canute's ballad, this revolution must have been achieved by the beginning of the eleventh century. Then the harsh and obscure style of the old Saxon poetry began to be unpopular; and being still more discredited after the Norman conquest, it was at length completely superseded by the ballad and the metrical romance.

## CHAP. II.

### ANGLO-SAXON *Narrative Poems, or Romances.* — *The Poem on* BEOWULF.



THE origin of the metrical romance has been lately an interesting subject of literary research; and as it has not been yet completely elucidated, it seems proper to enquire whether any light can be thrown upon it from the ancient Saxon poetry.

It was asserted by Mr. Ritson, in conformity with the prevailing opinion of antiquaries, that the Anglo-Saxons had no poetical romance in their native tongue. But he grounds this opinion on the fact, that no romance had been at that time discovered in Saxon but a prose translation from the Latin of the legend of Apollonius of Tyre. The Anglo-Saxon poem on Beowulf, which, after having been for ages neglected by our antiquaries, was particularly pointed out to the notice of the public in the first edition of this history in the year 1805, proves that this opinion was erroneous.

This work is a poem on the actions of its hero Beowulf. If it describes those deeds only which he actually performed, it would claim the title of an historical poem; but if, as few can doubt, the Anglo-Saxon poet has amused himself with pourtraying the warrior, and the incidents of his fancy, then it is a specimen of an Anglo-Saxon poetical romance, true in costume and manners, but with an invented story. It is the most interesting relic of the Anglo-Saxon poetry which time has spared to us; and, as a picture

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of the manners, and as an exhibition of the feelings and notions of those days, it is as valuable as it is ancient. There is only one MS. of it now existing, which is in the Cotton Library, Vitellius, A. 15.; and our antiquarian patriotism may be blamed that, when so much labour and money have been applied to print, at the public expence, so many ancient remains, and some of such little utility[1], we should have left this curious relic of our ancestors to have been first printed by a foreigner, and in a foreign country.[2]

The MS. of this poem was injured by the fire in the British Museum in 1731. It seems to have been written in the tenth century.[3] Its author, in several places, speaks as if he had been a contemporary of the events he describes; but this may be considered as a poetical licence, especially if it be historically true that Beowulf fell in Jutland in the year 340.[4] The following analysis of the poem will give the reader of this history a general notion of its contents, and the extracts will be selected with a view to show the manners it describes.

It opens with an exclamatory introduction of his hero, but without immediately naming him:—

[1] Under the commission for printing the public records of the kingdom much has been printed which deserves the thanks of the community; but I should have rejoiced to have seen the Anglo-Saxon remains substituted for some of the volumes which have perhaps never been twice opened since their publication, and will never be molested even by antiquaries again. Would not a more enlarged principle of selection have been more advantageous to our most valuable MSS?

[2] Ten years after the first edition of this part of the Anglo-Saxon history, Dr. G. J. Thorkelin, in the year 1815, printed this work at Copenhagen, which he addressed to the Lord John de Bulow, as his Mæcenas optime! by whose private munificence, he says, he had been enabled to bring into his country a monument of literature which was above a thousand years old. But he is not entitled to claim it as a Danish poem; it is pure Anglo-Saxon; and though I grant that the Anglo-Saxon language is very like that of the old Icelandic poetry which has survived, yet it is a similarity with great idiomatical and verbal differences. It is by no means identity.

[3] So the late Mr. Astle thought, and the writing has all the appearance of being of that age.

[4] Dr. Thorkelin mentions this on the authority of Suhn, in his Geschichte der Danen. I can neither deny nor confirm the chronology.

How have we of the Gar-Danes[5]
in former days,
of the Theod-kings[6],
the glory heard?
How the ethelings
excelled in strength!
Oft the scyld-scefing
from hosts of enemies,
from many tribes,
the mead-seats withdrew.

The earl was dreaded —
he grew up under the heavens;
he flourished in honours
till that each
of those sitting about
the path of the whole
should obey him;
should pay him tribute.[7]

His birth and encomium follow: —

There was a good king:
to him offspring
was afterwards born,
a youth in the world:
this one God sent
the people to comfort
because he understood their need,
which the Supreme knew
that they had before
a long while suffered.
To him the Lord of life,
the Ruler of glory,
the world's honours gave.[8]

He proceeds to name his hero, and to represent him as announcing and preparing for a warlike or predatory adventure: —

Beowulf was illustrious.
Wide sprang the rumour
that the offspring of the scyld
would rush upon some lands.
So would he be able
good vessels to obtain,
with abundant money-gifts,
in seasonable time.

Then with him, as formerly,
again associated
his voluntary companions.
When the battle was coming
the people followed him.
With deeds of praise
every where among the tribes
this man shall flourish.[9]

[5] Thorkelin calls these the northern Danes, inhabiting Zealand and the other isles, p. 261. His derivation of Gar from Aur, a peninsula in Iceland, is unsatisfactory. As a Saxon word, Gar-dena means the ancient Danes; as eald Saxons means the old Saxons.

[6] Of these see Vol. I. of this History, p. 382.

[7] Thorkelin's first translation of this poem was burnt in our bombardment of Copenhagen. At the request of his patron, Bulow, he made another translation in Latin, which he has published. As I very often differ with him in the construction of the original, I have attempted to convey the ideas of the poet in a version of my own, in the passages inserted in this work. Yet, as a *first* translation of a very difficult composition, I ascribe great merit to Dr. Thorkelin for that which he has published; and cordially thank him for the courage and ingenuity of his undertaking.

[8] Thorkelin's Beowulf, p. 4.

[9] Ibid. pp. 4, 5. On collating the Doctor's printed text with the MS. I have commonly found an inaccuracy of copying in every page; but for a first publisher he has been, on the whole, unusually correct.

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The description of their embarkation is then given:—

With them the scyld departed
to the ship,
while many were eager
to proceed with their lord.
They conducted him forth
to the journey of the ocean,
his dear companions
as he commanded,
when with words he governed
the friendly scyldingi,
the loved land-chieftain
had long possessed them.

There at the port he stood:
the voice rung on the ice
and out, ready
was the etheling's expedition.
They led then
the dear king,
the lord of bracelets,
the illustrious one,
into the bosom of the ship.
By the mast there was
of many vessels
from distant waves
the ornaments collected.[10]

The poet then indulges himself in describing the war-ship and its contents:—

I have never heard
that a more king-like ship
has been prepared.
With the weapons of Hilda,
and noble garments,
and bills and mails.
In its bosom lay
many vessels,
that with them should far depart
on the territory of the flood.
Nor did they place in it
few presents from the people's wealth;
this they did
who at its first formation
sent it forth,
alone over the waves,
a spacious vessel.
Then they fixed in it
the flowing banner
high over their heads.
They let the waters bear it,
the tide, into the ocean.
To him would be a soul of sorrow;
a mourning mind:
men would not be able
to say, in truth,
that any warrior under heaven
would have a happy state
who from them would take its lading.[11]

The poet then introduces to us a character who makes also a principal figure in his work: this is Hrothgar, one of the sons of Halfden, a Danish king, to whose dignity Hrothgar succeeded:—

Then was to Hrothgar
the army-treasure given,
the worship of battle.
Then him, his dear relations
diligently obeyed,
while the youth grew up
the great lord of his kinsmen.[12]

[10] Beowulf, p. 5. [11] Ibid. p. 6. [12] Ibid. p. 7.

The author now advances to the incident on which the main part of the poem turns, but which is narrated with considerable obscurity. The first incident is, that Hrothgar summons his warriors to one of those great meetings which it was customary with all the Teutonic kings to hold, which with the Anglo-Saxons was the time when their witena-gemot met, and when the sovereigns distributed their presents, as we have already mentioned.[13]

It occurred to his mind
that to the hall of his palace
he would summon his heroes.
Men hastened
much mead to prepare.
This the chiefs of men
always enquired for.
And within that place
he purposed to share every thing
with young and old,
except his territory
and the lives of his men.[14]

The meeting was proclaimed, and the assembly collected. The name given to the royal mansion, or town, was HEORT: —

When it was all ready
the great hall-chamber,
the poet called it Heort,
he that of his words
had extensive power.
The king was not menacing;
he laid out the bracelets;
he divided the treasure;
at the feast the lofty hall
resounded with shouts,
and with the crooked horn.[15]

An enemy is now abruptly noticed as watching this festivity with dark and secret purposes of malignity: —

He that abode in darkness,
while he every day
heard their joy
loud in the hall.[16]

The author continues his description of their festivity, and introduces the curious circumstance of a scop or poet singing a poem on the origin of things, like Iopas, at Carthage, before Dido and Æneas: —

[13] See before, pp. 174. 187.
[14] Beowulf, p. 8.
[15] Ibid. pp. 8, 9.
[16] Ibid. p. 9.

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There was on the harp
the sweet sound sung,
the poet's narration;
he that knew
the origin of men,
though remote to describe.[17]
He sang, that the ALMIGHTY
created the earth;
its bright, beauteous plains.
So the water-beds
he bendeth.
He established the path
of the fierce sun,
and the moon's light,
to illuminate
the inhabitants of the earth.
He has also adorned
the regions of the world
with leaves and splendor.
He has also made life
for every species
of those that move alive.[18]

The poet of the feast is represented as continuing his song to notice the evil beings that disturb both heaven and earth; and the murder of Abel, an idea of some ingenuity in the author, as it leads on to a scene of blood, which occasions the principal events of his work, and which he ascribes to a malignant being whom he now and afterward calls Grendel: —

Thus the Lord made mankind,
and they lived happily in joy,
till that one began
to perpetrate crimes,
the enemy in hell.
There was a more grim spirit called GRENDEL.
Great was the mark of his steps,
he, that ruled the moors,
the fen and the fastness
of the Fifel race.
Unhappy on the earth,
man resided awhile,
after the Creator had cast him off.
On Cain's offspring,
the Eternal Lord
avenged his murder.
His, who slew Abel.
He had no joy from that homicide;
but him afar
the Creator punished
for this crime to mankind.
From thence sprang
all the pernicious ones.
The Eotenas, and the Ylfe,
and the Orcneas;
such giants
as fought against God
for a long time,
till he retaliated on them his retribution.[19]

The author now represents the festive assembly as retiring to their rest; and while they were all sleeping secure and unsuspicious, this malignant enemy,

[17] At this part of the latter MS. is a leaf inserted out of its place, which completely confuses all just comprehension of the poem. Dr. Thorkelin remarked the interpolation, and has restored it to its proper place in his publication.

[18] Beowulf, pp. 9, 10.

[19] Ibid. pp. 10, 11.

or evil spirit, surprises them, and kills, in their repose, thirty thegns: —

He departed to observe,
after night had come on,
how in the lofty mansion,
the warlike Danes were resid-
ing,
after the quaffing of the beer,
He found there within
the assembly of the ethelings
sleeping after the feast,
knowing no sorrow.
This won-sceaft of men,
this creature unhealthful,
grim and greedy,
soon was ready,
reeking and fierce,
and he took away in their rest
thirty thegns.
Then again he departed,
satisfied with plunder,
to return home,
from that slaughter.[20]

This unexpected disaster became known in the morning, and excited both grief and indignation. The king, Hrothgar, was reproached for it, either from suspicion, or because he had not prevented it, or was unable to avenge it. For twelve winters the dissatisfaction of his people and his own vexation continued, and the fœhthe or homicide was still unpunished. It was in this state of things that Beowulf, hearing of "the deeds of the Grendel," undertook his expedition for the purpose of aiding[21] Hrothgar, finding out Grendel, and inflicting vengeance for his midnight murders.

Beowulf is described sometimes as a princely chief, and sometimes as the thegn, the heorth-geneat,

[20] Beowulf, p. 12.

[21] I observe that Mr. W. D. Conybeare, in his publication of his brother's "Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry," in 1826, has remarked that I had represented Beowulf as the enemy of Hrothgar instead of assisting him, p. 31. But his friendly censure arises from his having only consulted my early quarto edition. The truth is, that the poem had remained untouched and unnoticed both here and abroad until I observed its curious contents, and in 1805 announced it to the public. I could then give it only a hasty perusal, and from the MS. having a leaf interposed near its commencement, which belonged to a subsequent part, and from the peculiar obscurity which sometimes attends the Saxon poetry, I did not at that time sufficiently comprehend it, and had not leisure to apply a closer attention. But in the year 1818 I took it up again, as I was preparing my third edition, and then made that more correct analysis which was inserted in that and the subsequent edition, and which is also exhibited in the present. If Mr. W. Conybeare had seen the later editions, he would have found that there was no difference between us; but that the view of the poem which these present is that which his brother afterwards adopted, and which he has expressed in his interesting publication, — a truly fraternal memorial to the merits of an ardent and elegant scholar.

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and the beod-geneat of a king named Higelac. He is also styled lord of the scyldingi. His father was Ecgtheow, and his people are called Geata or Jutes.[22] He is thus represented as resolving on his enterprise: —

He said, "The battle-king
over the road of the swans
will seek the great sovereign,
as he has need of men.
This expedition, for him,
prudent Ceorles shall soon provide."[23]

His companions assembled at his request, and

Sought the wood of the sea,
the warrior directed
the sea-skilled men
to the boundary of the shore.
The vessel was under the rock,
the heroes ready,
at his voice went down;
they waded thro' the streams
of the sea: on the sands
the warriors bore
into the empty bosom
the bright ornaments,
the instruments of battle,
of the Jute-like men.
The adventurers drew out,
for their voluntary journey,
the well-bound timber.[24]

Their voyage is then stated. Their sailing is described to be like the fanning of the neck of a fowl, till

They saw land;
the cliffs of the ocean;
the shining hills;
the steep wide promontories:
there their voyage ended.

Their debarkation follows:

The people of the storm
ascended on the plain.
They fastened the wood of the sea;
they shook their syrcas;
the garments of battle;
they thanked God,
that to them the wave-journey
had been so easy.[25]

The poet then exhibits the alarm, vigilance, and enquiries of those who had been appointed to watch the coast:

Then from the wall,
he that the sea-cliff
should maintain,
beheld the chief of the scyldingi
carrying over the rock
the bright shield
and battle weapons.
Hastily he broke the fire-vessel,
anxiously weighing in his mind

[22] Beowulf, p. 17. 22. 28, 29, 30.
[23] Ibid. p. 18.
[24] Ibid. p. 19.
[25] Ibid.

who these men could be.
The thegn of Hrothgar then turn'd
to the shore of battle to ride.
Among his bands he shook
the wood of strength in his hands;
he enquired their intentions by his words.
"What are ye,
such a mailed host
of weaponed men,
that thus the bright keel
over the sea-street have led?
Come ye hither over the waves
to molest the inhabitants?
I keep guard here,
that on the land of the Danes
no hostile ones
with a ship-army injure them."[26]

Beowulf advances to answer him; states his country and descent, and assures him that he has come on a friendly errand to Hrothgar, and to assist him to procure vengeance on his dreaded enemy.

The Danish warder answers civilly, and sends the tidings of their arrival to his sovereign[27], while Beowulf's warriors prepared to advance.

The street was of varied stone,
the path was observed
by the men together.
Their battle-mail shone
by hard hands well locked.
The shining iron rings
sung against their weapons,
when they to the palace,
in their formidable apparel,
were delighted to go.[28]

But as they were arranging their shields, and displaying their arrows and their ashen shafts, with the grey iron heads, they were interrupted by an opposing band:—

A powerful champion asked them,
"Why do you here carry
your lusty shields,
grey vestments of war;
and grim helms,
and this heap of the shafts of battle?
I am Hrothgar's messenger and envoy;
I have never seen of foreigners
so many valiant-looking men.
For a path of revenge,
or for glory of mind,
do you seek Hrothgar?"[29]

Beowulf tells him that his errand is with his ealdor if he will permit him to greet him. Wulfgar, "of the Wendel people," who answered him, announces their arrival to Hrothgar, and advises him to be on his

[26] Beowulf, p. 20.
[27] Ibid. p. 22—26.
[28] Ibid. p. 26.
[29] Ibid. p. 27.

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guard. But the king declares that he knew him when "a cniht," and orders him to be welcomed and escorted to his palace.[30] Beowulf is then introduced to Hrothgar.

Beowulf addressed him.
The mail shone upon him:
the heavy net was linked
by the smith's care.
"Thou, Hrothgar! hail!
I am the kinsman of Higelac,
and a born thegn.
Many an enterprise
have I begun in my youth;
to me the ruler of my native soil
this affair of Grendel revealed.
"The sea-sailing ones said
that this mansion, once the happiest hall,
has been to some warriors
deformed and useless,
after the light of evening,
under the serene sky,
had become darkened.
My people have taught me
that they were the happiest of wise Ceorles.
"King Hrothgar, I have sought thee,
that they may know my strength.—
And now against Grendel,
against that wretched one,
I will alone exert myself
against that Thyrse.
"Of thee, now, I ask one prayer,
bright lord of the Danes,
the hedge of the scyldingi!
Do not thou deny me,
asylum of warriors!
dear lord of thy people!
as I have thus far come;
let me alone,
the lord of my eorls
and of this sturdy host,
expiate Heorot.
"I hear that the wretch
madly cares not for weapons;
but this I despise,
so that Higelac, my lord,
may be blithe in his mind,
I will bear the sword
and the ample shield,
my yellow buckler, to the battle.
I will seize the foe with my grasp,
and fearless contend
with hate against the hateful."[31]

Recollecting, however, with modesty of mind, the adverse chances of battle, Beowulf adds:—

"If death should take me away,
Bear me from the bloody slaughter;
remember to bury me.
Eat over the solitary wanderer
un-mourningly.
Mark my hillock with the simple flower;
nor do thou about the fate
of my bodily life long sorrow;
but send to Higelac,
if Hilda should withdraw me,
my garments of battle.
The best that my bosom bears,
the richest of my clothes,
the remains of the Hred-lan,
the work of Weland.
Now let fortune
wheel as she may.[32]

[30] Beowulf, p. 28—32. [31] Ibid. p. 33—35. [32] Ibid. p. 36.

Hrothgar answers this manly speech in a friendly manner, and ends it with inviting him to "a feast in the hall of mead." Benches are spread "in the beer hall;" the thegn arranges them; the cup-bearer, "laden with ale," distributes it to the band. The scop, or poet, is again introduced, singing peace in Heorot[33]; but a new character is introduced: Hunferth, "the son of Eglaf, who sat at the feet of the lord of the Scyldingi." He is described as jealous of Beowulf's reputation, and as refusing to any man more celebrity than himself. He is represented as taunting Beowulf on his exploits as a sea-king or vikingr.

"Art thou Beowulf,
he that with such profit
labours on the wide sea,
amid the contests of the ocean?
There you for riches,
and for deceitful glory,
explore its bays
in the deep waters,
till you sleep with your elders.
Nor can any man restrain you,
whether dear or odious to you,
from this sorrowful path.
There you rush on the wave;
there on the water streams:
from the miserable you flourish.
You place yourselves in the sea-street;
you oppress with your hands;
you glide over the ocean
through the waves of its seas.
The fury of winter rages,
yet on the watery domain
seven nights have ye toiled."

After other allusions to his exploits, he ends his speech with predicting:—

"If thou darest the Grendel,
the space of a long night awaits thee."[34]
Beowulf answered
the son of Ecgtheow.
"What a throng of many words,
my friend Hunferth,
Drunk with beer, hast thou spoken!"

He proceeds to justify himself for attempting the adventure, by a statement of some of his achievements, which is given as an illustration of their habits of life:—

We said when a cniht,
and we threatened in the life of youth,
that out on the ocean,
with our elders we would sleep;
and we accomplished our purpose.
Naked were our swords,
hard in our hands,
when we rushed into the bay,

[33] Beowulf, p. 37—39.

[34] Ibid. p. 40, 41.

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and against the whale fishes
intended to defend ourselves.
No creature could float away,
far on the waves of the flood
from me,
swifter thro' the ocean
than I could pursue him.
For the space of five nights
we were together on the sea,
until the flood dispersed us;
the raging waves and the cold-
est sky,
the nipping nights and the north
wind;
fierce were the waves,
strong and grim their rolling,
the rage of the great fishes was
excited.
There against the enemies
my body's iron vest,
by hard hands well locked,
gave me complete help.
My braided battle-garment
lay on my breast,
adorned with gold.
The hateful enemy
would have dragged me to the
ground;
fast he would have had me in
his grim gripe,
but that it was given to me
that I should reach the wretch
with my point.
With the battle-axe of Hilda,
thro' my hands in the noble
onset,
I took the mighty sea-deer.[35]

Beowulf continues to talk of his exploits. The conversation is carried on; and the author thus describes the continuation of the banquet, and the appearance of the queen of Hrothgar amid the festivity, and assisting to honor Beowulf: —

There was in the hall
the dispenser of treasure,
the long-haired one, illustrious
in battle,
the bright lord of the Danes.
He believed his salutation;
he heard from Beowulf,
the guardian of his friends,
the firmly counselled thought.
There was from the men
the din of laughter resounding;
their words were pleasant.
Waltheow came forth:
the queen of Hrothgar,
mindful of her descent,
circled with gold, she greeted
the warrior in the hall;
and the lordly wife gave the cup
to the first of the East Danes,
to the noble warder.
She welcomed him blithely,
the one dear to his people,
to that feast of beer.
He glowed with delight,
the illustrious king of victory,
at the feast and that hall-cup.
Then the lady went about
the helmed nobles and the
youths.
A portion to every one
of the treasured vessels she
gave;
till the opportunity arrived
that she, the queen, circled with
bracelets,
elevated in her mind,
bore the cup of mead to Beo-
wulf.
She greeted the Jute people;
wise with steady words, she
thanked God
that he had fulfilled her wish,

[35] Beowulf, p. 43, 44.

for she believed the earl would
be a comforter to his people in
any thing.
He took the cup with joy,
the warrior of fierce slaughter
at the wall of the Whales,
and then he sang that the battle
might be hastened.[36]

The author proceeds to describe the continuation of these courteous civilities, which show us the royal manners of the day:—

Beowulf spoke, the son of
Ecgtheow,
"When I launch'd my sea-boat
on the waves,
with the company of my war-
riors,
I thought that I alone
would fulfil the wish of your
people.
And in the deadly conflict,
fast with hostile gripe,
I will show an earl-like strength.
To the end of my day
in this mead-hall expect me."
These words pleased the wife;
the Jute's expressions of glory.
Encircled with gold, she went,
the queen of the free-like people,
to sit by her lord.
Then, as before in the hall,
words of menace were uttered.
The people in the mansion
sang the victories of their na-
tion,
till the son of Healfdan suddenly
sought his evening rest.[37]

Before he retires, Hrothgar again greets his brave visitor: he then withdraws with his own warriors. The queen "prays the King of Glory against Grendel," and the warder of the hall conducted Beowulf to his place of repose.

Then he took off from him
his iron coat of mail,
and his helm from his head.
He gave his ornamented sword
of select iron
to his attendant thegn,
and bade him keep the instru-
ment of Hilda.
The loved nobleman bent down
his cheek,
his bolster received the face of
the earl,
and many of the active sea-
warriors
around him, to happy rest in-
clined.[38]

But while they are in this state of rest and comfort, the poet prepares to change the scene.

The spirit of the wan night
came on;
the hosts of the shadows roll up.
The shooters sleep—even those
that should have held the horn
of the palace.[39]

The ancient enemy now suddenly returns, to take advantage of their security, by a new surprise.

[36] Beowulf, p. 45—49.
[37] Ibid. p. 50.
[38] Ibid. p. 52—54.
[39] Ibid. p. 55.

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Then came from the moors,
amid the mist from the mountains,
the Grendel, bearing the Divine anger.
The hateful foe purposed in his madness
to destroy treacherously some in that high hall.
He knew that the wine palace,
the gilded hall of warriors,
had been stored with various vessels.
It was not the first time
that he had sought the home of Hrothgar,
but never on former days, or since,
had he attempted braver men
than those hall thegns.[40]

His fatal measures are thus described : —

Swiftly he passed the mouth of the hall,
and on the joyless floor the fiend trod;
he moved in wrathful mind;
he stood with eyes likest to flame,
a frightful light.
He saw in that mansion,
many warriors sleeping
in peace with their lord.
A band of related heroes.
Then his mind laughed:
deformed wretch!
He proposed that he should separate
the life of each from his body.
A feast full of hope shone before him.
The WYRD seemed propitious to him,
that he might prevail over more men that night.
He contemplated with rage
the kinsman of Higelac,
and how the execrable one
might get him under his fierce gripe.[41]

He appears to have been under the necessity of attacking first one of the warriors that surrounded Beowulf before he could reach the chief.

He assailed the sleeping warrior on his upper side:
his club struck the unwary one
on the bone of his locks;
the blood burst from the broken veins.[42]

Beowulf awakes as the Grendel is about to destroy him; a fierce contest ensues between them, which is described at some length; and the issue of it is the flight and escape of Grendel without effecting his full purpose.[43] The people assemble in the morning at the place of conflict, surprised at the tidings. Beowulf is highly honoured for his first success. Much rejoicing and conversation ensue upon it. Hrothgar goes and congratulates Beowulf, and declares that he shall consider him as his son. Beowulf, in a respect-

[40] Ibid. p. 56.
[41] Ibid. p. 57.
[42] Thorkelin here inserts the misplaced leaf.
[43] Beowulf, p. 58—64.

ful answer, shortly describes the conflict. The jealous son of Eglaf becomes silent, and another splendid banquet is prepared.[44]

It was then commanded
that the interior of Heort
by hands should be adorn'd.
There was then a number
of men and women,
who the wine-chamber
of the great mansion prepared.
There shone, variegated with gold,
the web on the walls;
many wonders to the sight
of each of the warriors
that would gaze on it, became visible.[45]

The king himself proceeded to the festive hall; and the author declares, that he had never heard that a nobler assembly, "about their giver of treasures, the chamber had ever borne." The royal presents to Beowulf are then described:—

They bent towards the tables,
to enjoy their full fruit;
fair and free they rejoiced;
the mead cups abounded;
many kinsmen contended with them.
In the lofty hall
were Hrothgar and Hrothulf.
Heorot was filled with friends within.
No deceitful stafas (letters or charms)
the people of the scyldingi there framed.
Then to Beowulf he gave
the sword of Healfdan;
a golden banner,
the reward of his victory;
an ensign adorned in the hilt;
a helmet and coat of mail;
a great sword with decorations;
many saw borne before the hero.
Beowulf fully prospered in the chamber;
he needed not be ashamed
of the money gifts then poured on him.
I have not observed
four vessels of gold more liberal,
prepared on the table of their meal,
to be given to many others of the men.
Around the roof of the helmet,
the castle of the head,
was a hedge firmly circled,
to keep off slaughter,
that no remains of danger on him
might the steel hard with scouring inflict,
when against the guilty robber
in fury he should go.
The asylum of eorls then commanded
eight mares with fat cheeks,
to be drawn into the chamber;
on each of them was stationed
a saddle, varied with trappings richly made.
That was the high king's seat of battle,
when the oblation of swords
the son of Healfdan would perform.
Never on the fatal far famed conflict
would they shrink from the slaughter.[46]

[44] Beowulf, p. 68—75.

[45] Ibid. p. 76.

[46] Ibid. p. 77—79. This description corresponds with the gifts of kings to their nobles and knights, alluded to before.

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Hrothgar gives these presents to Beowulf, and exhorts him to use them manlily. He also gave "vases from the treasure of his inheritance to each of those at that mead table, who followed Beowulf through the paths of the ocean."[47] The author moralises shortly, that the Creator governs all men; and that the understanding is the best part of the soul; and that —

Much forethought shall abide in it,
both of love and hatred
to him that in these days of trouble
long enjoys the world.[48]

Then were song and music united
before Healfdan's leader of Hilda,
the mouth greeted the wood;
the lay was oft narrated;
the hall games followed;
the poet of Hrothgar,
behind the table of mead,
recorded the expedition against the Finns.[49]

This episode is rather long. The enterprise ended in the capture of the king and queen of the Finns. After this —

The song was sung;
the lay of the gleemen.
The games again sprang up.
The music of the table enlivened them,
the cup-bearers distributed the wine
from wonderful vessels.

Then came forth Waltheow
to go under the golden crown,
where the two good heroes sat akin;
peace reigned between them,
each with the other in full confidence.[50]

The queen is then again exhibited as assisting actively in the friendly assembly; turning to her husband, —

Then the lady addressed the scyldinga:
"Take this cup, lord of my love!
Dispenser of treasure!
In thy hall thou hast been gladdened
with the wine of men;
and to the Jutes has spoken
with the mild words that should be used.

Be cheerful with the Jutes,
mindful of gifts far and near.
"I am told thou hast declared,
thou would'st have their chief for a son.
Heorot is now expiated;
the mansion bright with bracelets.
Enjoy the plentiful mead while thou canst,

[47] Beowulf, p. 80.
[48] Ibid. p. 81.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid. p. 88, 89.

and to thy relations leave
thy people and thy kingdom,
when thou shall see the metod-sceaft."[51]

After reminding him that Hrothulf will rule with honour if he survive him, and take care of their offspring, she returns to her seat, where her children and their young friends were near her. Soon the music is repeated; and taking some valuable ornaments, the queen again rises.

Before the assembly she spoke: —
"Accept this bracelet, dear Beowulf!
Be it an omen of reward to you.
And these garments — enjoy their wealth,
and flourish well with skilful valour;
and to these cnihts
be mild in thy counsels.
I will be careful of thy reward.[52]

After some further commendations, and recommending her sons to his attention, she orders "the drink to be got ready for the noble ones," and returns to her seat. Evening came on, the king withdrew, the tables were taken away, and the place was spread with beds and bolsters.

Some of the beer servants,
speedy and joyful,
prepared the chamber of rest.
They fixed over their heads
the shields of Hilda;
the boards of bright wood.
There high over the Etheling on his bench,
the helmet of the noble one was seen,
his ringed coat of mail,
his glorious wood of strength.[53]

They all incline to rest; and in this situation the inveterate enemy attacks them again, but not in person. It is the mother of Grendel that is now the assailant; she enters secretly among the friends of Hrothgar, and kills one of his dearest thegns. Beowulf was not in that part, and the murderess escapes.[54] Hrothgar is much grieved for him, and exclaims: —

"Dead is Æschere,
the son of Yrmenlates;
the brother of the elders;
of my run-witan;
of my ræd bora."[55]

[51] Beowulf, p. 90.
[52] Ibid. p. 93.
[53] Ibid. p. 95.
[54] Ibid. p. 96—100.
[55] Ibid. p. 101. These are some of the names given by the Anglo-Saxons to the members of their witena-gemot.

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Hrothgar goes on to lament the situation of his people, thus exposed to such assaults; ascribes the mischief to Grendel, and gives an account of his habitation.[56] Beowulf in an heroic speech proposes to undertake the enterprise of punishing both Grendel and his mother for these new fehthes. He collects his own forces and some of Hrothgar's, and prepares for the expedition.[57] His arming himself is described. He takes an old sword of some celebrity that is described, and called Hrunting. He makes a farewell speech to Hrothgar, and requests that if Hilda, their goddess of war, should take him away, the presents he has received should be sent to Higelac his lord.[58]

He then proceeds to the adventure, and begins it by a combat with the mother of Grendel, who attacks him like a sea-wolf. He fights valiantly, but he finds the famous sword of no use. She is not impressible by its edge; her strength and fury begin to overpower him: she throws him down, and is proceeding to destroy him, when an enchanted sword, a weapon of the ancient giants, and of their fabrication, comes within his reach: he strikes her with it, and she dies under his blow.[59] This success is followed by a victory over Grendel himself, whom he also destroys, and whose head he carries off and presents to Hrothgar.[60]

He tells the king that he could achieve nothing with Hrunting.

> "But the ruler of ages granted me,
> that over the waves I should see
> an ancient sword hang beautiful.
> It was often declared,
> by the wine geleasum,
> that I should draw this weapon.[61]

Hrothgar looks at it, and says it was an ancient relic, on which were written the battles of the ancient

[56] Beowulf, p. 102—104.
[57] Ibid. p. 105—109.
[58] Ibid. p. 110—113.
[59] Ibid. p. 114—119.
[60] Ibid. p. 120—124.
[61] Ibid. p. 126.

times, when after the flood the race of the giants were destroyed. On the polished blade, in pure gold, the runæ-letters were marked.[62]

The poem proceeds to describe Beowulf's return to Higelac. He engages in some further adventures, which are not of equal interest with the former. He succeeds Higelac in his kingdom; builds a city; fights thirty battles; and dies after a reign of fifty years.[63] Such is the substance of this curious poem, which is quite Anglo-Saxon in the manners it describes, and corroborates several of those features, which in the preceding pages have been delineated. It seems to be the oldest poem, in an epic form, that now exists in any of the vernacular languages of modern Europe.[64] Other Saxon poems still exist which deserve the student's notice.[65]

[62] Beowulf, p. 127, 128.

[63] Ibid. p. 137—236.

[64] I do not pretend to give this sketch of Beowulf as a perfect outline, nor will presume it to be without some imperfections. It is many years since I have been able to inspect the ancient MS. of it, and I could not then, in the time that I was able to give it, decypher every part to my own satisfaction. I am not sure that every line can be now correctly read or transcribed, but I have no doubt that the talents and patient attention of other students will supply what I am compelled to leave in a state more deficient than I would have done, if my young health and strength had still continued to me,—"Non omnis possumus omnes."

[65] Another Anglo-Saxon narrative poem, of a much smaller size, remains in the fragment on the death of Byrhtnoth, which was formerly in the Cotton MS. Otho, A. 12., and which Hearne has printed at the end of his Joh. Glaston. Chronicon. The original MS. has been since burnt. Mr. W. D. Conybeare has inserted a valuable translation of it at the end of his arranged catalogue. It is very interesting, and exhibits the Anglo-Saxon genius in narrative composition in its most favourable light. It contains 690 lines, but the beginning and the end are defective. As Byrhtnoth fell in 991, it belongs to the latest age of Anglo-Saxon poetry, and is curious as an authentic picture of the manners of that period. The short fragment on the battle of Finsburuh in the Exeter MS. is, like Beowulf, rather romance than history. Mr. W. Conybeare has inserted it in his Illustrations, with a Latin translation, and a pleasing imitation in English verse, p. 173—182. The Byrhtnoth fragment, of which we have inserted a part under the reign of Ethelred, Vol. II. p. 262, 263., thus spiritedly describes the battle: —

"The fight was then nigh. Glory incited to it. The hour was come when the fated warriors should fall. Shouts arose. The ravens congregated; and the eagle greedy of its food. Clamour was on the earth. They darted from their hands many a stout spear. The sharpened arrows flew. The bows were busy. The buckler received the weapon's point. Bitter was the fight. Warriors fell on either side. The youths lay slain." Conyb. p. xcii. Hearne, Joh. Glast. App.

## CHAP. III.

ANGLO-SAXON *Poems of* JUDITH *and* CÆDMON. — *Their other Poetry.*

BOOK IX.

THE fragment which remains of the poem on Judith, may be deemed another Anglo-Saxon poetical romance. The subject of this poem is taken from the Apocrypha, but the Anglo-Saxon poet has borrowed merely the outline of the story. All the circumstances, the descriptions, and the speeches, which he has inserted, are of his own invention. He has, therefore, done what all romancers did. He has applied the manners and characters of his day to the time of Judith, and thus really made it an Anglo-Saxon romance.

It is curious, from another circumstance. It is a romance written while the old Anglo-Saxon poetry was in fashion, but when it began to improve: for, while it displays the continuity of narration and minuteness of description of the more cultivated romance, it retains some metaphors, the periphrasis, and the inversions which our stately ancestors so much favoured. It has only laid aside their abrupt transitions and more violent metaphors.

The eight first sections of the poem on Judith, and part of the ninth, are lost. It begins with a part that corresponds with this verse in the Apocrypha[1]: —

"And in the fourth day Holofernes made a feast to his own servants only, and called none of the officers to the banquet."

[1] Judith, xii. 10.

The Saxon poet expresses this passage thus:

Understood I then,
Holofernes ordered
wine to be made diligently,
and with all wonders
a splendid feast to prepare.
To this commanded
the Baldor[2] of men,
all the eldest thegns.
They with much haste obeyed:
the shielded warriors came
to the rich king;
the leaders of the people.
This was the fourth day
that Judith,
cunning in thought,
the woman shining like an elf,
first sought him.

The subsequent narration of the Apocrypha is not followed by the poet; but instead of it, from his own invention, he substitutes these circumstances: —

They then to the feast
went to sit,
eager to drink wine;
all his fierce chiefs,
bold, mail-clad warriors!
There were often carried
the deep bowls
behind the benches;
so likewise vessels
and orcas full
to those sitting at supper.
They received him, soon about to die,
the illustrious shield-warriors:
though of this the powerful one
thought not; the fearful
lord of earls.
Then was Holofernes
exhilarated with wine;
in the halls of his guests,
he laughed and shouted;
he roared and dinned;
then might the children of men
afar off hear
how the stern one
stormed and clamoured,
animated and elated with wine.
He admonished amply
that they should bear it well,
to those sitting on the bench.
So was the wicked one
over all the day,
the lord and his men,
drunk with wine,
the stern dispenser of wealth;
till that they swimming lay
over drunk,
all his nobility
as they were death-slain;
their property poured about.
So commanded the Baldor of men
to fill to them sitting at the feast,
till that to the children of men
the dark night approached.
Then commanded he
the man so overpowered,
the blessed virgin
with speed to fetch
to his bed rest,
with bracelets laden,
with rings adorned.
Then quickly hurried
the subjected servants,
as their elder bade them.
The mailed warriors
of the illustrious lord
stepped to the great place.
There they found Judith,
prudent in mind;
and then firmly,
the bannered soldiers
began to lead
the illustrious virgin

[2] Baldor was one of the sons of Odin. — His name is figuratively used to express a chief.

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to the high tent.
There the powerful one
his rest on the feast night
within was enjoying;
the odious Holofernes.
There was the fair
the golden fly net
about the chief's bed hung,
that the mischief-ful
might look thro',
the Baldor of the soldiers,
on every one
that there within came
of the children of men;
and on him no one
of man kind;
unless the proud one,
any man of his illustrious soldiers,
commanded to come
near him to council.
Then they to the bed
brought quickly
the prudent woman.
Then went
the fierce-minded men
their lord to tell,
that the holy woman was brought
into the chamber of his tent.
Then was the illustrious one
blithe in mind.
The elder of the cities thought
the bright woman
with filth and pollution to stain.
But the Judge of Glory,
the keeper of majesty,
would not suffer it;
but the Lord,
ruler of his nobles,
from this thing restrained.
Then departed
the devil-worshipping lustful one
from the host of men,
mischief-ful,
his bed to visit,
where he should
suddenly his blood lose
within one night.
So, drunken with wine,
the rich one fell
on the middle of his bed,
as he knew no discretion
in the inclosure.
The soldiers stepped
out of the chamber
with much haste:
the wine-ful men
that the perfidious
people-hating tyrant
led to the bed
the nighest way.
Then was the glory-ful
maiden of the Saviour
very mindful
how she the foul elder
might easiest destroy,
before the vicious
stainful one awoke.
The maid of the Creator
with twisted locks
took then a sharp sword,
hard with scouring,
and from the sheath drew it
with her right limb.

## The poet then describes her killing Holofernes:

She took the heathen man
fast by his hair;
she drew him by his limbs
towards her disgracefully;
and the mischief-ful
odious man
at her pleasure laid;
so as the wretch
she might the easiest well command.
She with the twisted locks
struck the hateful enemy,
meditating hate,
with the red sword,
till she had half cut off his neck;
so that he lay in a swoon,
drunk, and mortally wounded.
He was not then dead,
not entirely lifeless;
she struck then earnest,

the woman illustrious in strength,
another time
the heathen hound;
till that his head
rolled forth upon the floor.
The foul one lay without a coffer;
backward his spirit turned
under the abyss,
and there was plunged below,
with sulphur fastened;
for ever afterwards wounded by worms.
Bound in torments,
hard imprisoned,
in hell he burns.
After his course
he need not hope,
with darkness overwhelmed,
that he may escape
from that mansion of worms;
but there he shall remain
ever and ever,
without end, henceforth
in that cavern-home,
void of the joys of hope.
Jud. p. 23.

The poet continues to describe Judith's escape to the town of her countrymen. Her reception is thus mentioned:

There were they blythe,
those sitting in the burgh,
after they heard
how the Holy One spake
over the high wall.
The army was rejoiced.
Towards the gates of the fastness
the people went,
men and women together,
in numbers and heaps,
in crowds and hosts.
They thronged, and ran
against the illustrious maid,
from a thousand parts,
old and young.

Here repetition of phrase is the substitute for energy of description.

The poet then gives her speech to the people: —

Then the discreet one ordered,
adorned with gold,
to her maidens,
with thoughtful mind,
that army-leader's
head to uncover,
and it on high,
bloody, to show
to the citizens —
Then spake the noble one
to all the people.
"Here may we manifestly
stare on the head
of the man illustrious for victory,
of the leader of his people,
of the odious heathen commander;
of the not living Holofernes,
he that of all men to us
most murders has done,
sore sorrows;
and more yet
would have augmented them,
but that to him God grants not
a longer life,
that he with injuries
should afflict us.
I from him life took away,
through God's assistance.
Now I to every man
of these citizens
will pray,
of these shield warriors,
that ye immediately
haste you to fight.
When God, the source of all,
the honour-fast king,
from the East sends
a ray of light,
bear forth your banners;

with shields for your breasts,
and mail for your hams,
shining helmets,
go among the robbers;
let their leaders fall,
the devoted chiefs,
by the ruddy sword!
they are your enemies,
destined to death,
and ye shall have their doom,
victory from your great leader,
the mighty Lord!
as he hath signified to you
by my hand."

Jud. p. 24.

The sally which immediately took place, and the consequent battle, are thus described: —

Then was the host of the swift
quickly gathered together,
the soldiers to the field;
the warriors and the nobles
illustrious stepped forth.
They bore the Tufas,
they went to fight
straight onwards:
men under helms
from the holy city,
at the dawn itself.
They dinned shields;
men roared loudly.
At this rejoiced the lank
wolf in the wood,
and the wan raven,
the fowl greedy of slaughter,
both from the west,
that the sons of men for them
should have thought to prepare
their fill on corpses.
And to them flew in their paths
the active devourer, the eagle,
hoary in his feathers.
The willowed kite,
with his horned beak,
sang the song of Hilda.
The noble warriors proceeded,
they in mail, to the battle,
furnished with shields,
with swelling banners.
They that awhile, before
the reproach of the foreigners,
the taunts of the heathen
endured.
To them what had been hard
at that play of swords,
was in all repaid
on the Assyrians;
when the Hebrews,
under the banners,
had sallied
on their camps.
They then speedily
let fly forth
showers of arrows,
the serpents of Hilda,
from their horn bows;
the spears on the ground
hard stormed.
Loud raged
the plunderers of battle;
they sent their darts
into the throng of the chiefs.
The angry land-owners
acted as men
against the odious race.
Stern-minded, they advanced
with fierce spirits:
they pressed on unsoftly,
with ancient hate,
against the mead-weary foe.
With their hands, the chiefs
tore from their sheaths
the sheer, cross-sword,
in its edges tried:
they slew earnestly
the Assyrian combatants.
Pursuing with hate,
none they spared
of the army-folk
of the great kingdom
of the living men,
whom they could overcome.

Jud. p. 24.

Cædmon's Paraphrase.

As Cædmon's paraphrase is a poetical narration mixed with many topics of invention and fancy, it has also as great a claim to be considered as a narrative poem, as Milton's Paradise Lost has to be deemed an epic poem. It was published by Junius as the work of the ancient Cædmon, who has been already mentioned. It treats on the first part of the subjects which Bede mentions to have been the topics of the elder Cædmon; but it is presumed by Hickes not to be so ancient as the poet mentioned by Bede. I confess that I am not satisfied that Hickes is right in referring it to any other author than the person to whom Junius ascribes it.

It begins with the fall of angels, and the creation of the world. It proceeds to the history of Adam and Eve; of Cain, and the deluge; of Abraham and of Moses. The actions of Nabuchodonosor and Daniel are subjoined.

In its first topic, "the fall of the angels," it exhibits much of a Miltonic spirit; and if it were clear that our illustrious bard had been familiar with Saxon, we should be induced to think that he owed something to the paraphrase of Cædmon. No one at least can read Cædmon without feeling the idea intruding upon his mind. As the subject is curious, I shall make no apology for very copious extracts from Cædmon, translated as literally as possible :—

On the Fall of the Angels.

To us it is much right
that we the Ruler of the firmament,
the Glory-King of Hosts,
with words should praise,
with minds should love.
He is in power abundant,
High Head of all creatures,
Almighty Lord!
There was not to him ever beginning
nor origin made;
nor now end cometh.
Eternal Lord!
But he will be always powerful
over heaven's stools,[3]

[3] I use the term in the original, because such expressions as have any allusion to ancient manners should always be preserved. Since I published my idea that Milton may have taken some of his conceptions of his Satan from Cædmon, Mr. Todd has favoured me with a copy of the following letter from Bishop Nicholson to Humphrey Wanley on the same subject. It is dated 20th August, 1706. "I have

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in high majesty,
truth-fast and very strenuous,
Ruler of the bosoms of the sky!
Then were they set
wide and ample,
thro' God's power,
for the children of glory,
for the guardians of spirits.
They had joy and splendour,
and their beginning-origin,
the hosts of angels;
bright bliss was their great fruit.
The glory-fast thegns
praised the King:
they said willingly praise
to their Life-Lord;
they obeyed their sovereign with virtues.
They were very happy;
sins they knew not;
nor to frame crimes:
but they in peace lived
with their Eternal Elder.
Otherwise they began not
to rear in the sky,
except right and truth,
before the Ruler of the angels,
for pride divided them in error.
They would not long do
council for themselves!
but they from the peace and
love of God departed.
They had much pride
that they against the Lord
would divide
the glory-fast place,
the majesty of their hosts,
the wide and bright sky.
To him there grief happened,
envy, and pride;
to that angel's mind
that this ill counsel
began first to frame,
to weave and wake.
Then he words said,
darkened with iniquity,
that he in the north part
a home and high seat
of heaven's kingdom
would possess.
Then was God angry,
and with the host wrath
that he before esteemed
illustrious and glorious.
He made for those perfidious
an exiled home,
a work of retribution,
Hell's groans and hard hatreds.
Our Lord commanded the punishment-house
for the exiles to abide,
deep, joyless,
the rulers of spirits.
When he it ready knew
with perpetual night foul,
sulphur including,

long wished for an accurate translation of Cædmon, and Mr. Dean (Hickes) only is able, glad I am to hear that he is willing, to undertake that part. Honest Mr. Junius told me there were three or four words in that poem which he did not understand. This perhaps hindered him from attempting a complete translation; though, I believe, most of it is rendered piece-meal in the quotations he has made thence in his Saxon dictionary.

"I hope *your translator* will oblige us with the reasons of his opinion, if he still continues in it, that a good part of Milton's Paradise was borrowed from Cædmon's. I can hardly think these two poets under the direction of the same spirit: and I never could find, I think his introduction to our English history rather evinces the contrary, that Oliver's secretary was so great a master of the Saxon language, as to be able to make Cædmon's paraphrase his own."

I do not know who Wanley's translator was, nor his reasons for thinking that Milton had consulted Cædmon. I have myself no other than the apparent similarity of some of the thoughts on a peculiar and uncommon subject, in which casual resemblances are less likely to occur than on more usual topics. Milton could not be wholly unacquainted with Junius; and if he conversed with him, Junius was very likely to have made Cædmon the topic of his discourse, and may have read enough of it in English to Milton to have fastened upon his imagination without his being a Saxon scholar.

over it full fire
and extensive cold,
with smoke and red flame,
he commanded them over
the mansion, void of council,
to increase the terror-punishment.
They had provoked accusation;
grim against God gathered together,
to them was grim retribution come.
They said that they the kingdom
with fierce mind would possess,
and so easily might.
Them the hope deceived,
afterwards the Governor,
the high King of Heaven,
his hands upreared.
He pursued against the crowd;
nor might the void of mind,
vile against their Maker,
enjoy might.
Their loftiness of mind departed,
their pride was diminished.
Then was he angry;
he struck his enemies
with victory and power,
with judgment and virtue,
and took away joy:
peace from his enemies,
and all pleasure:
Illustrious Lord!
and his anger wreaked
on the enemies greatly,
in their own power
deprived of strength.
He had a stern mind;
grimly provoked;
he seized in his wrath
on the limbs of his enemies,
and them in pieces broke,
wrathful in mind.
He deprived of their country
his adversaries,
from the stations of glory
he made and cut off,
our Creator!
the proud race of angels from heaven;
the faithless host.
The Governor sent
the hated army
on a long journey,
with mourning spirits.
To them was glory lost,
their threats broken,
their majesty curtailed,
stained in splendour;
they in exile afterwards
pressed on their black way.
They needed not loud to laugh;
but they in Hell's torments
weary remained, and knew woe
sad and sorry:
they endured sulphur,
covered with darkness,
a heavy recompense,
because they had begun
to fight against God.

Cæd. p. 1, 2.

Cædmon thus describes the creation:— On the Creation.

There was not then yet here,
except gloom like a cavern,
any thing made.
But the wide ground
stood deep and dim
for a new lordship,
shapeless and unsuitable.
On this with his eyes he glanced,
the king stern in mind,
and the joyless place beheld.
He saw the dark clouds
perpetually press
black under the sky,
void and waste;
till that this world's creation
thro' the word was done
of the King of Glory.
Here first made
the Eternal Lord,
the Patron of all creatures,
heaven and earth.
He reared the sky,
and this roomy land established
with strong powers,

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Almighty Ruler!
The earth was then yet
with grass not green;
with the ocean covered,
perpetually black;
far and wide
the desert ways.
Then was the glory-bright
Spirit of the Warder of heaven
borne over the watery abyss
with great abundance.
The Creator of angels commanded,
the Lord of life!
light to come forth
over the roomy ground.
Quickly was fulfilled
the high King's command:
the sacred light came
over the waste
as the Artist ordered.
Then separated
The Governor of victory
over the water-flood
light from darkness,
shade from shine;
he made them both be named,
Lord of life!
Light was first,
thro' the Lord's word,
called day,
creation of bright splendour.
Pleased well the Lord
at the beginning,
the birth of time,
the first day.
He saw the dark shade
black spread itself
over the wide ground,
when time declined
over the oblation-smoke of the earth.
The Creator after separated
from the pure shine,
our Maker,
the first evening.
To him ran at last
a throng of dark clouds.
To these the King himself
gave the name of night:
our Saviour
these separated.
Afterwards, as an inheritance,
the will of the Lord
made and did it
eternal over the earth.
Then came another day,
light after darkness.
The Warder of life then commanded
the greater waters
in the middle to be
a high-like heaven timber.
He divided the watery abyss
our Governor,
and made them
a fastness of a firmament.
This the Great One raised
up from the earth,
through his own word,
Almighty Lord!
The world was divided
under the high firmament
with holy might;
waters from waters:
from those that yet remain
under the fastness,
the roof of nations.
Then came over the earth,
hasty to advance,
the great third morning.
There were not then yet mae
the wide land,
nor the useful ways;
but the earth stood fast,
covered with flood.
The Lord of angels commanded,
thro' his word,
the waters to be together,
that now under the firmament
their course hold
an appointed place.
Then stood willingly
the water under heaven,
as the Holy One commanded.
Far from each other
there was separated
the water from the land.
The Warder of life then beheld
dry regions;

the Keeper of the virtues
wide displayed them.

Then the King of Glory
named it the earth.

Cæd. p. 3, 4.

But that part of Cædmon which is the most original product of his own fancy, is his account of Satan's hostility. To us, the "Paradise Lost" of Milton has made this subject peculiarly interesting; and as it will be curious to see how an old Saxon poet has previously treated it, we shall give another copious extract. Some of the touches bring to mind a few of Milton's conceptions. But in Cædmon the finest thoughts are abruptly introduced, and very roughly and imperfectly expressed. In Milton the same ideas are detailed in all the majesty of his diction, and are fully displayed with that vigour of intellect in which he has no superior.

The universal Ruler had
of angel races,
through his hand-power,
the holy Lord!
a fortress established.
To them he well trusted
that they his service
would follow,
would do his will.
For this he gave them understanding,
and with his hands made them.
The Holy Lord
had stationed them
so happily.
One he had so
strongly made,
so mighty
in his mind's thought;
he let him rule so much;
the highest in heaven's kingdom;
he had made him
so splendid;
so beautiful
was his fruit in heaven
which to him came
from the Lord of Hosts;
that he was like
the brilliant stars.

Praise ought he
to have made to his Lord;
he should have valued dear
his joys in heaven;
he should have thanked his Lord
for the bounty which
in that brightness he shared;
when he was permitted
so long to govern.
But he departed from it
to a worse thing.
He began to upheave strife
against the Governor
of the highest heaven,
that sits on the holy seat.
Dear was he to our Lord;
from whom it could not be hid,
that his angel began
to be over-proud.
He raised himself
against his Master;
he sought inflaming speeches;
he began vain-glorious words;
he would not serve God;
he said he was his equal
in light and shining;
as white and as bright in hue.
Nor could he find it in his mind
to render obedience

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to his God,
to his King.
He thought in himself
that he could have subjects
of more might and skill
than the Holy God.
Spake many words
this angel of pride.
He thought through his own craft
that he could make
a more strong-like seat,
higher in the heavens.

Satan is represented as uttering this soliloquy which begins with doubting about his enterprise, but ends in a determination to pursue it:

"Why should I contend?
I cannot have
any creature for my superior!
I may with my hands
so many wonders work!
and I must have great power
to acquire a more godlike stool,
higher in the heavens!
Yet why should I
sue for his grace?
or bend to him
with any obedience?
I may be
a god, as he is.
Stand by me,
strong companions!
who will not deceive me
in this contention.
Warriors of hardy mind!
they have chosen me
for their superior;
illustrious soldiers!
with such, indeed,
one may take counsel!
with such folk
may seize a station!
My earnest friends they are,
faithful in the effusions of their mind.
I may, as their leader,
govern in this kingdom.
So I think it not right,
nor need I
flatter any one,
as if to any gods
a god inferior.
I will no longer
remain his subject."[4]

After narrating the consequent anger of the Deity, and the defeat and expulsion of Satan, the poet thus describes his abode in the infernal regions:

The fiend, with all his followers,
fell then out of heaven;
during the space
of three nights and days;
the angels from heaven
into hell; and them all
the Lord turned into devils:
because that they
his deed and word
would not reverence.
For this, into a worse light
under the earth beneath
the Almighty God
placed them, defeated;
in the black hell.
There have they for ever,
for an immeasurable length,
each of the fiends,
fire always renewed.
There comes at last
the eastern wind,
the cold frost
mingling with the fires.
Always fire or arrows,
some hard tortures,

[4] *i.e.* his younger.

they must have:
made for their punishment.
Their world was turned.
Hell was filled,
their former place,
with the execrable ones.
They suffer the punishment
of their battle against their Ruler;
the fierce torrents of fire
in the midst of hell:
brands and broad flames;
so likewise bitter smoke,
vapour and darkness.—
They were all fallen
to the bottom of that fire
in the hot hell,
thro' their folly and pride.
Sought they other land,
it was all void of light,
and full of fire,
a great journey of fire.—

Another of Satan's speeches may be cited:

Then spake the over-proud king,
that was before
of angels the most shining;
the whitest in heaven;
by his Master beloved,
to his Lord endeared;
till he turned to evil;—
Satan said,
with sorrowing speech—
"Is this the narrow place,
unlike, indeed, to the others
which we before knew,
high in heaven's kingdom,
that my Master puts me in?
But those we must not have,
by the Omnipotent
deprived of our kingdom.
He hath not done us right,
that he hath felled us
to the fiery bottom
of this hot hell,
and taken away heaven's kingdom.
"He hath marked that
with mankind
to be settled.
This is to me the greatest sorrow,
that Adam shall,
he that was made of earth,
my stronglike stool possess.
He is to be thus happy,
while we suffer punishment;
misery in this hell!
Oh that I had free
the power of my hands,
and might for a time
be out;
for one winter's space,
I and my army!
but iron bonds
lay around me!
knots of chains press me down!
I am kingdomless!
hell's fetters
hold me so hard,
so fast encompass me!
Here are mighty flames
above and beneath;
I never saw
a more hateful landscape.
This fire never languishes;
hot over hell,
encircling rings,
biting manacles,
forbid my course.
My army is taken from me,
my feet are bound,
my hands imprisoned!—
Thus hath God confined me.
Hence I perceive
that he knows my mind.
The Lord of Hosts
likewise knows
that Adam should from us
suffer evil
about heaven's kingdom,
if I had the power of my hands.—
He hath now marked out
a middle region;
where he hath made man
after his likeness.

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From him he will
again settle
the kingdom of heaven
with pure souls.
We should to this end
diligently labour,
that we on Adam,
if we ever may,
and on his offspring,
work some revenge."

After explaining his plan of seducing Adam to disobedience, he adds,

"If, when king,
to any of my thegns
I formerly gave treasures;
when we in that good kingdom
sat happy,
and had the power of our thrones;
when he to me,
in that beloved time,
could give no recompense,
to repay my favour;
let him now again,
some one of my thegns,
become my helper,
that he may escape hence
thro' these barriers;
that he with wings may fly,
may wind into the sky,
to where Adam and Eve
stand created on the earth.—
"If any of you
could by any means change it,
that they of God's word
the command would neglect,
soon they to him
would become odious.
If Adam brake thro'
his obedience,
then with them would the Supreme
become enraged,
and prepare their punishment,
some destructive portion,
if he should lose that kingdom.
"Strive ye all for this,
how ye may deceive them!
Then shall I repose softly,
even in these bonds.
To him that accomplishes this
a reward shall be ready
for his future life.
Of this we may from hence
go from this fire
to acquire the advantages.
I will let him sit
opposite to myself,
whoever he may be,
that shall come to say,
in this hot hell,
that they the command
of the king of heaven
unworthily
by words and deeds
have disobeyed."[5]

Cæd. 6—11.

[5] In that Saxon composition in the Exeter MS. which Mr. Conybeare denominates the "Gnomic Poem" there is a passage on the whale, which he has thus translated in his Illustrations: "This monster of the deep resembles in appearance the rude and barren rock; so that incautious mariners cast their anchor in its side, disembark, and kindle their fire; when suddenly it plunges and overwhelms them amid the waves." This is so like the ground-work of Milton's simile, that we may adduce it as another proof that he was not unacquainted with the Saxon remains: —

"Him, haply, slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small, night-founder'd skiff,
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays."

Par. L. b. i. l. 203.

Here Milton has converted the rude simplicity of the Saxon into a rich picture.

From these poems of Beowulf, Judith, and Cædmon, it is clear that the Anglo-Saxons had begun to compose long narrative poems, rising at times both to fancy and feeling, and making some pretensions to the name of heroic poems. From whence did this taste originate?

The epic poems of antiquity seem to me to be the legitimate parents of all the narrative poetry of Europe, and the progress of the descent may be sufficiently traced.

The Romans derived this species of composition from the Greeks, and cultivated it with varying success. Their epic poetry established a taste for narrative poems wherever their language spread. This appears from the poems of this sort, which the writers of the various countries of Europe under their influence attempted to compose, and some of which may be briefly enumerated.

In the fourth century we have a narrative poem, in Latin hexameter verse, written by VICTORINUS, an African rhetorician, on the slaughter of the Maccabees. It is not much above four hundred lines in length.[6]

In the same century, JUVENCUS, a Spaniard, wrote a narrative poem, in hexameter verse, on the history of Christ, which contains four books, and above three thousand lines. The narration is carefully carried on, but the poetry is of an humble cast.[7]

One of the most remarkable poems of AURELIUS PRUDENTIUS, a Spaniard of consular dignity, is the Psychomachia. This is an allegorical poem, in eight books, on the virtues and vices of the mind, in a sort of heroic narration. It is partly the same subject

Yet an incident of this sort occurs also in the Arabian tales; and this fact leads us to the inference, that as these two minds, without any communication or borrowing from each other, thought of it, so might others.

[6] Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 625—628.

[7] Ibid. p. 629—657.

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which our Spenser has combined with a chivalric story. In Prudentius, every virtue and every vice come out as persons, armed or dressed appropriately to their different qualities, and harangue and fight. It consists of one thousand and twenty-two hexameter lines.[8]

In the fifth century, SEDULIUS, an Irishman, went to France, Italy, and Asia; and on his return from Achaia, settled at Rome. He has written a narrative poem on the miracles of Christ, which he calls his Paschale Opus. It is in five books, containing about two thousand hexameter lines. It is almost wholly narration and description, seldom enlivened by dialogue; but his style of verse is much superior to that of the preceding authors, and has somewhat of the air of Statius.[9]

CLAUDIUS MARIUS VICTOR, a rhetorician of Marseilles, lived in the same century. His poetical commentary on Genesis is a narrative poem on the creation, the fall of man, and the subsequent history, including that of Abraham. In the part of his poem which concerns "Paradise Lost," the most original incidents are these: while Adam is addressing the Deity in a long penitential speech, they see the serpent gliding before them. Eve counsels his destruction. She immediately pursues him with stones, in which Adam joins, till one of them, striking a flint, elicits a spark, which instantly kindles a flame and sets the woods in a blaze. The unexpected sight of this new element of fire terrifies our parents into a hasty flight. The poem contains about eighteen hundred lines.[10]

The poems of SIDONIUS on the emperor, his friend, contain a sort of heroic fable. In the panegyric on Avitus, the emperor speaks, as do others; and Jupiter

[8] Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 463—471.
[9] Ibid. p. 658—678.
[10] Ibid. p. 580—595.

likewise harangues.[11] The life of St. Martin by PAULINUS, a senator of Aquitain, afterwards a bishop, in hexameter verse, must be also considered as a narrative poem of considerable length. It is in six books, and contains about three thousand seven hundred hexameter lines. Though it abounds with fiction it is very dull.[12]

In the sixth century ALCIMUS AVITUS, the archbishop of Vienne, composed a narrative poem on the Jewish history, from the creation to Exodus, in five books, comprising above two thousand lines. The first book is on the creation, the second on the fall, the third on the expulsion from Paradise, the fourth on the flood, and the fifth on the passage of the Red Sea. It is more remarkable for its antiquity than for its poetry. But it must be ranked much above the lowest in the list of the leaden goddess.[13]

ARATOR, a Roman sub-deacon, in the same century, wrote a narrative poem on the apostolic history, in two books, and about two thousand four hundred lines. It is more entitled to be enumerated than read. Its purpose is much better than its versification.[14]

FORTUNATUS, a loquacious poet, bishop of Poitou, devoted four books, and about two thousand lines, to a narrative poem of the life of St. Martin. As it is full of his miracles, it is full of invention; but as the poets whom he enumerates, in his proemium, as his models, are those whom we have just mentioned, it may be expected that the pupil has not obscured his tutors either by his taste or his genius.[15]

[11] Sid. Apoll. [12] Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 852—882.

[13] Ibid. p. 596—618. It is a curious example of the uncertainties of literary criticism, that the works of this author should be spoken of by an intelligent reviewer as *newly discovered in* 1840. "The researches of the French antiquaries into the literary history of the middle ages have *brought to light* another work to which Milton was directly or indirectly indebted; a poem by St. Avitus, Bishop of Vienne in Gaul, entitled 'Creation, Original Sin, and the Expulsion from Paradise.' . . . . M. Guizot was *the first* who directed attention to this poem."—Athenæum, Feb. 15. 1840.

[14] Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 682—700. [15] Ibid. p 753—772.

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In the seventh century, we have the heroic poem of PETRUS APOLLONIUS, an Italian, on the destruction of Jerusalem, in above two thousand hexameters. It obviously emulates the style and the manner of the best models. It attempts epic machinery and dramatic effect, though the success of the effort is not always equal to its ambition. One part of its machinery is the sending the angel Raphael to the Tartarian abodes, to command one of the demons to go and persuade the Jewish leaders to revolt from the Romans, that they may bring their punishment on themselves.[16]

In the eighth century, we have BEDE'S Life of Saint Cuthbert, of which a specimen will be given in the chapter on the Latin poetry of the Anglo-Saxons. It is, indeed, a romance in Latin verse. The incidents are fanciful tales of Cuthbert's miraculous adventures. They are narrated in a dramatic form, as the specimen hereafter given will show. It consists of nine hundred and seventy-nine lines.

All these poems are obviously the offspring of the Roman Epopeas; and show, that by them the taste for narrative poetry was excited in France, in Spain, Italy, and Britain. From the epic poems of antiquity, and their imitations, the Anglo-Saxons, as well as the Franks, and the Goths in Spain, learnt the art of constructing and carrying on an epic fable. The first imitations were in Latin, by those who knew the language and loved its poetry. But that men arose who cultivated poetry in their native tongue, as well as in the Latin language, we learn from the example of Aldhelm. His Latin poetry will be noticed in the next chapter; and we have already remarked, from the information of Alfred, that he took great pains to compose poems for the instruction of his countrymen in their vernacular tongue.

[16] Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 731—752.

The first narrative poems were probably composed by the ecclesiastics. The poems of Cædmon and on Judith are obviously religious; and some passages of Beowulf have that air. Such men, from their learning, would be best skilled in the art of narration; and from them it probably descended to the scop, or professional poet.

That the ecclesiastics of those ages greatly cultivated the art of narrative invention, and were successful in their efforts, we see from their legends. The miraculous stories in Gregory's dialogues, in Bede's history, and in other writers of that time, are in fact so many fanciful tales, much more poetical in their invention and narration than any of those works which then passed as poetry.

That the legends and lives of Saints were translated from Latin into Anglo-Saxon, we know to be a fact. Alfred caused Gregory's dialogues to be translated, which are nothing but legends or tales of the miraculous actions of the Italian saints, but so numerous as to fill one hundred and sixteen folio pages. It is as complete a specimen of fictitious narration as any book of fairy tales which has been published. Every nation of Europe, after the fall of the Roman empire, had some such narratives of supernatural agency; and therefore we must consider the monks as the great inventors of narrative fiction. So numerous were their creations, that the lives of the saints, which have been collected and published, amount, in the last edition, to above a hundred thick folio volumes, written chiefly in the early and middle ages of Europe, and all abounding with tales of supernatural agency. Some display very striking imagery and rich invention, others are dull. The ancient lives of the Irish saints are so extravagant in their imputed miracles, that the editors, who believe the truth of all the others, have felt it decorous to caution the reader that the fancy of these

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biographers has been too ardent, and their credulity too indiscriminate.

The lives of the saints which still exist in the Anglo-Saxon language, show that they were diffused among the people; and the fact, that some ecclesiastics, like Aldhelm, chose to compose poems in their native language, to improve the people, makes it probable that many of the legends were put into Anglo-Saxon poetry.

For these reasons, we may consider the Roman epic poems as the parents of the narrative poetry of modern Europe, and the ecclesiastics who had a poetical taste, as the first composers of narrative poems in our vernacular languages, and more particularly in the Anglo-Saxon.

Their Lyric Poetry.

Of their lyric, or miscellaneous poetry, one of the oldest and best specimens is Alfred's poetical translation of the poetry in Boetius, which has been already noticed.

To the already copious specimens of the Anglo-Saxon poetry, we will add the following Ode, which is appended to the menology. It is a very singular and curious composition: —

The king shall hold the kingdom;
castles shall be seen afar,
the work of the mind of giants,
that are on this earth;
the wonderful work of wall stones.
The wind is the swiftest in the sky;
thunder is the loudest of noises;
great is the majesty of Christ;
fortune is the strongest;
winter is the coldest;
spring has most hoar-frost;
he is the longest cold;
summer sun is most beautiful;
the air is then hottest;
fierce harvest is the happiest:
it bringeth to men
the tribute fruits,
that to them God sendeth.
Truth is most deserving;
treasures are most precious,
gold, to every man;
and age is the wisest,
sagacious from ancient days,
from having before endured much.
Woe is a wonderful burthen;
clouds roam about;
the young Etheling
good companions shall
animate to war,
and to the giving of bracelets.
Strength in the earl,
the sword with the helm

shall abide battle.
The hawk in the sea-cliff
shall live wild;
the wolf in the grove;
the eagle in the meadow;
the boar in the wood
powerful with the strength of his tusk.
The good man in his country
will do justice.
With the dart in the hand,
the spear adorned with gold,
the gem in the ring
will stand pendent and curved.
The stream in the waves
will make a great flood.
The mast in the keel
will groan with the sail yards.
The sword will be in the bosom,
the lordly iron:
the dragon will rest on his hillock,
crafty, proud with his ornaments;
the fish will in the water
produce a progeny.
The king will in the hall
distribute bracelets.
The bear will be on the heath
old and terrible.
The water will from the hill
bring down the grey earth.
The army will be together
strong with the bravest.
Fidelity in the earl;
wisdom in man!
The woods will on the ground
blow with fruit;
the mountains in the earth
will stand green.
God will be in heaven
the judge of deeds.
The door will be to the hall
the mouth of the roomy mansion.
The round will be on the shield,
the fast fortress of the fingers.
Fowl aloft
will sport in the air;
salmon in the whirlpool
will roll with the skate;
the shower in the heavens,
mingled with wind,
will come on the world.
The thief will go out
in dark weather.
The Thyrs[17] will remain in the fen,
alone in the land.
A maiden with secret arts,
a woman, her friend will seek,
if she cannot
in public grow up
so that men may buy her with bracelets.
The salt ocean will rage;
the clouds of the supreme Ruler,
and the water floods
about every land,
will flow in expansive streams.
Cattle in the earth
will multiply and be reared.
Stars will in the heavens
shine brightly
as their Creator commanded them.
God against evil;
youth against age;
life against death;
light against darkness;
army against army;
enemy against enemies;
hate against hate;
shall every where contend:
sin will steal on.
Always will the prudent strive
about this world's labour
to hang the thief;
and compensate the more honest
for the crime committed
against mankind.
The Creator alone knows
whither the soul
shall afterwards roam,
and all the spirits
that depart in God.

[17] A Thyrs was among the Northerns a giant, or wild mountain savage, — a sort of evil being somewhat supernatural.

BOOK IX.

After their death-day
they will abide their judgment
in their father's bosom.
Their future condition
is hidden and secret.
God alone knows it,
the preserving Father!
None again return
hither to our houses,
that any truth
may reveal to man,
about the nature of the Creator,
or the people's habitations of glory
which he himself inhabits.[18]

There is a volume of miscellaneous Saxon poetry in the cathedral library at Exeter, the gift of its first bishop, Leofric, from which some interesting pieces have been selected, and were communicated to the Society of Antiquaries, by the Rev. J. J. Conybeare. The MS. had lain unnoticed since the time of Wanley until he inspected it.[19]

Of the remains in this Exeter MS. the following complaint of an Anglo-Saxon, who had been driven into exile and separated from his lord, has the effect of interesting us with the feelings and grief of the forlorn poet.[20]

THE EXILE'S SONG.

Ic this gied wrece
Bi me, ful geomorre;
Minre sylfre sith,
Ic thæt secgan mæg
Hwæt ic yrmtha gebad
Siththan ic up aweox
Niwes oththe ealdes.
No man thon nu,
A ic wite won

Minra wroe sitha ærest.
Min hlaford gewat

I this lay compose
of myself, full sad;
of my own journeying,
that I may say
what miseries I have endured
since I grew up
lately or of old.
I serve no man now,
I have always struggled with the suffering
chiefly of my exile path.
My lord departed

[18] See the Saxon ode in Hickes's Grammat. Anglo-Sax. p. 207, 208.

[19] Some of these were sent to the Antiquarian Society by Mr. J. Conybeare, and were printed in the 17th volume of the Archæologia. They have been since his death republished with many valuable additions by his congenial brother, who, to a love of our Saxon antiquities, adds also no common knowledge of mineralogy and geology.

[20] Mr. W. Conybeare, who has printed it with a translation, justly says of it, "His situation and feelings are expressed with more pathos, and his lonely retreat amid the woods exhibits more power of description than can be usually found in Saxon poetry." Illust. p. 245.

Heonan of leodum
Ofer ytha gelac:
Hæfde ic wht ceare
Hwær min leod fruma
Londes were
Tha ic me feran gewat
Folgath secan:
Wineleas wrecca fer.
  Minre wea thearfe ongunnon

Thæt thæs monnes
Magas hycgan
Thurh tyrere gethoht
Thæt hy todælden unc;
Thæt wit, gewidost
In worulde rice
Lifdon lath licost.
And mec longade
Hat mec hlaford min
Her heard niman.
  Ahte ic leofra lyt
On thessun londstede
Holdra freonda.
Forthon is min hoga geomor,
Tha ic me ful gemæc
He monnan funde
Heard soligne,
Hyge geomorne,
Mod unthendue,
Morther hycgende.
  Blithe gebæro
Ful oft wit beotedon
Thæt unc ne gedælde

Nemne death ana owiht elles;
Eft is thæt en hweorfan,
Is nu swa hit no were
Freondscipe uncer.
Seal is feor geneah
Mines fela leofan.
  Fæhtha dreogan
Heht mec man wunian
On wudre bearwa,
Under ac treo
In tham eorth scræfe.
  Cald is this eorthsele:
Eal ic eom oflengad.
Sindor dena dimne,
Duna up hean,
Bitre burg-tanes,

hence from his people
over the lake of the waves:
I had daily anxiety
in what lands
my chieftain was
when I departed to go
to seek his service:
a friendless exile's journey.
  The hardships of my woes began
that this man's
relations contrived
thro' perverted thought
to separate us two;
that we two, most widely
in the world's kingdom
should live most like enemies.
And I was weary
that my lord ordered me
to be here taken hardly away.
  I have little that I love
in this country
of faithful friends.
For this my mind is sad,
when I fully equal to me
have found no man
in hard fortune,
sad in mind,
depressed in spirit,
musing on destruction.
  In blithe habits,
full oft we too agreed
that nought else should divide us
except death alone;
at length this is changed,
and as if it never had been
is now our friendship.
The bond is far broken
of my greatly beloved.
  To endure enmities
man orders me to dwell
in the bowers of the forest,
under the oak-tree
in this earthy cave.
  Cold is this earth-dwelling:
I am quite wearied out.
Dim are the dells,
high up are the mountains,
a bitter city of twigs,

BOOK IX.

brærum beweaxne,
wic wynna leas.
Ful oft mec her wrathe
Begeat from sith frean,
Frynd synd en earthan,
Leof lifgende
Leger weardiath,
Thon ic on uhtan
Ana gange.
Under ac treo
Geond thas eorth scrafa,
Thær ic sittan mot
Summer langne dæg.
Thær ic wepan mæg
Mine wræc sithas
earfotha fela.
Forthon ic æfne ne mæg
Thære mod ceare
Minre gerestanne
Ealles thæs longa
Thæs mec on thissum life begeat.[21]

with briars overgrown,
a joyless abode.
Full oft wrath here me
has pursued from my lord's path,
my friends are in the earth,
those loved in life
the grave is guarding,
while I above
alone am going.
Under the oak-tree
beyond this earth-cave,
there I must sit
the long summer-day.
There I may weep
my paths of exile
of many troubles.
For this I never can
from the care
of my mind, rest
of all the weariness
that has pursued me in this life.

From the same Exeter MS. Mr. J. Conybeare extracted an Anglo-Saxon hymn of thanksgiving on the creation, which claims our notice for the elegant imitations he has subjoined to convey to the English reader its contents. Before we quote these we will copy the Saxon, and add a literal translation.

Thæt is wyrthe,
Thæt the wer theode
Secgan Drythne thonc

Dugutha ge hwylcre
The us sith and cer
Simle gefremede,
Thurh monigfealdra
Mægna geryno.
He us æt giefed,
and æhta sped,
Welan ofer wid lond,
And weder lithe,
Under swegles hleo.
Sunne and mona,
Æthelast tungla!

This is worthy,
that the race of man
should express thanks to the Lord
for all the benefits
which to us formerly and since
he has continually produced,
thro' the mystery
of his manifold might.
He has given us food,
and the riches of our possessions,
wealth over extensive lands,
and mild weather,
under the shade of the sky.
The sun and moon,
noblest of stars!

[21] Conybeare's Illust. p. 244—248. That I may not borrow servilely from him, I have inserted my own translation, assisted by that of Mr. W. C.

Eallum scinath;
Heofen candelle,
Helethum on eorthan.
Dreoseth deaw,
And ren duguthe
Weccath to feorhnere
Fira cynne:
Iecath eorth welan.

they shine to all;
the lights of heaven,
to men on the earth.
The dew falls,
and the good rain
excites to a shelter
the race of mortals:
It increases the earth's riches.[22]

---

Se the ær sungen
Thurh yrne hyge
Ældum to sorge,
"Ic thee ofer
Eorthan geworhte.
On thære thu scealt
Yrmthum lifgan,
Wunian in gewinne,
And wræce dreogan
Feondum to hrother,
Fus leoth galan:
And to thære ilcan
Scealt eft geweorthan,
Wyrmum aweallen.
Thonan wites fyr
Of thære eorthan
Scealt eft gesecan."

Erst he had sung
thro' an angered mind
to our elders in sorrow,
"I thee over
the earth have made.
On that thou shalt
live in sufferings,
dwell in toils,
and endure punishment
from the rage of enemies,
ready with their evil song:
and to that same
shalt thou again return,
breaking out into worms.
Then the fiery punishment
from this earth
thou shalt finally seek."[23]

[22] Mr. J. Conybeare has thus pleasingly versified this passage, p. 218.

Befits it well that man should raise
To Heav'n the song of thanks and praise,
For all the gifts a bounteous God
From age to age hath still bestow'd.
The kindly seasons temper'd reign,
The plenteous store, the rich domain
Of this mid-earth's extended plain,
All that his creatures' wants could crave,
His boundless pow'r and mercy gave.
Noblest of yon bright train that sparkle high,
Beneath the vaulted sky,
The Sun by day, the silver'd Moon by night,
Twin fires of Heav'n, dispense *for man* their useful light.
Where'er on earth his lot be sped,
*For Man* the clouds their richness shed,
In gentler dews descend, or op'ning pour
Wide o'er the land their fertilizing shower.

[23]

Not such the doom
Our sorrowing fathers heard of old,
The doom that in dread accents told
Of Heaven's avenging might, and woe, and wrath to come.
"Lo! I have set thee on earth's stubborn soil
With grief and stern necessity to strive;
To wear thy days in unavailing toil,
The ceaseless sport of tort'ring fiends to live.
Thence to thy dust to turn, the worms' repast,
And dwell where penal flames thro' endless ages last."

BOOK IX.

The poem continues for some length, and thus concludes:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Se this world gescop : | He made this world : |
| Godæs Gæst-sunu ! | The Spirit Son of God ! |
| And us giefe sealde | And to us gave as a gift |
| Uppe mid englum | Above with angels |
| Ece stathelas. | Eternal stations. |
| And eac monigfealde | And also manifold |
| Modes snyttru | Excellencies of mind |
| Seow and sette | He sowed and set |
| Geond sefan monna. | Over the intellect of men. |
| Sumum word lathe | With some master-words |
| Wise sendeth | He sendest to the wise |
| On his modes gemynd, | In his mind's memory, |
| Thurh his muthes gæst, | Thro' the spirit of his mouth, |
| Æthele ongiet. | A noble understanding.[24] |

The poet here introduces his picture of the pursuits of mankind, which, from his pen, is interesting:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Se mæg eal fela | He may all or many things |
| Singan and secgan | Sing and say |
| Tham bith snyttru-cræft | On whom the intellectual skill |
| Bifolen onferthe. | Has fallen into his soul. |
| Sum mæg fingrum wel | Some may with their fingers well |
| Hlude fore hælethum | Sonorously before men |
| Hearpan stirgan, | Agitate the harp, |
| Gleobeam gretan. | And clamour on the trumpet of joy. |
| Sum mæg godcunde | Some may the divine |
| Reccan ryhte æ. | And righteous law explain. |

Thrice Holy He,
The Spirit Son of Deity !
He called from nothing into birth
Each fair production of the teeming earth ;
He bids the faithful and the just aspire
To join in endless bliss Heaven's angel choir.
His love bestows on human kind
Each varied excellence of mind.
To some his Spirit-gift affords
The power and mastery of words :
So may the wiser sons of earth proclaim,
In speech and measured song, the glories of his name.
J. Conyb. Illust. 220.

[24] Mr. J. Conybeare remarks on this part: "It will doubtless remind the classical reader of the exquisite choral song of Sophocles in his Antigone, commencing Πολλα τα δεινα; and the fine moral reflection with which it terminates would not have disgraced the composition even of the most philosophic poet of antiquity."

Sum mæg ryne tungla
Seegan; side gesceaft!
Sum mæg learolice
Word cwide writan.
Sumum wiges sped
Giefed æt guthe;
Thon gargetrum
Ofer scild hreadan
Sceotend sendeth
Flacor flangeweore.
Sum mæg fromlice
Ofer sealtne sæ
Sund-wudu drifan,
Hreran holm thræce.

Sum mæg heannebeam
Stælgne gestigan;
Sum mæg styled sweord
Wæpon gewyrcan.
Sum con wonga begong,
Wegas wid gielle.
Swa se waldend us,
Godbearn on grundum,
His giefe bryttad.
Nyle he ængum anum
Ealle gefyllan
Gæstes snyttru,
Thy læs him gielp scethe.

Some may the course of the stars
Declare; a spacious creation!
Some may learnedly
Word-sayings write.
To some the wealth of battle
He has given as the conflict;
When the dart-armed soldier
Of the shield, his reeds
Shooting sends
The death-working arrows.
Some may hardily
Over the salt sea
Drive the wood of the ocean,
Rearing up the fortress of the waves.
Some may from the lofty tree
Make the column ascend;
Some may the steeled sword
For a weapon work.
Some knew the business of the fields,
And cry on the wide roads.
So the governor to us,
The Son of God on earth,
His gifts has distributed.
He will not any one
Wholly fill
With the wisdom of his Spirit,
Lest pride should injure him.[25]

[25] Some the tuneful hand may ply,
And loud before the list'ning throng,
Wake the glad harp to harmony,
Or bid the trump of joy its swelling note prolong.
To these he gave Heav'n's righteous laws to scan,
Or trace the courses of the starry host,
To these the writer's learned toil to plan,
To these the battle's pride and victor's boast;
Where in the well-fought field the war-troop pour
Full on the wall of shields the arrows flickering shower.
Some can speed the dart afar,
Some forge the steelly blade of war,
Some o'er Ocean's stormy tide
The swift-wing'd ship can fearless guide.
Some in sweet and solemn lays
The full-toned voice of melody can raise.
So heav'n's high Lord each gift of strength or sense
Vouchsafes to man, impartial, to dispense.
And of the power that from his Spirit flows
On each a share, on none the whole bestows.
Lest favoured thus beyond their mortal state,
Their pride involve them in the sinner's fate. Illust. 222.

BOOK IX.

We are also indebted to Mr. J. Conybeare for bringing to notice a fragment of later Saxon poetry, from a MS. in the Bodleian. It occurs towards the conclusion of a MS. volume of homilies. It is a speech of death on the last home of man—the grave. The turn of thought is singular, and is more connected with the imagination than Saxon poems usually are. I transcribe Mr. Conybeare's literal translation:[26] —

DEATH SPEAKS.

For thee was a house built
Ere thou wert born,
For thee was a mould shapen
Ere thou of (*thy*) mother camest.
Its height is not determined,
Nor its depth measured,
Nor is it closed up
(However long it may be)
Until I thee bring
Where thou shalt remain;
Until I shall measure thee
And the sod of earth.
Thy house is not
Highly built (timbered),
It is unhigh and low;
When thou art in it
The heel-ways are low,
The side-ways unhigh.
The roof is built
Thy breast full nigh;
So thou shalt in earth
Dwell full cold,
Dim, and dark.
Doorless is that house,
And dark it is within;
There thou art fast detained,
And Death holds the key.
Loathly is that earth-house,
And grim to dwell in;
There thou shalt dwell
And worms shall share thee.
Thus thou art laid
And leavest thy friends;
Thou hast no friend,
That will come to thee,
Who will ever inquire
How that house liketh thee,
Who shall ever open
For thee the door
And seek thee,
For soon thou becomest loathly,
And hateful to look upon.

After these copious specimens of the Anglo-Saxon poetry, we will merely notice, from its peculiarity, one more of Saxon, intermingled with Latin, with five Greek terms. It occurs at the end of a very ancient MS. of Aldhelm, as a concluding addition:

Thus me gesette,
*Sanctus et justus;*
Beorn boca gleaw;
*Bonus auctor*
Thus has settled me,
The holy and just one;
The man skilled in books;
The good author

[26] See the Saxon with a Latin translation, Arch. vol. xvii. p. 174.

| | |
|---|---|
| Ealdem æthele sceop | Aldhelm, the noble poet, |
| *Etiam fuit ipse* | He was also |
| On æthel Angel-Seaxtra, | In the country of the Anglo-Saxons, |
| Byscep en Bretene. | A bishop in Britain. |
| I nu sceal, | I shall now, |
| *Ponus et pondus ;* | A labor and a weight ; |
| *Pleno cum sensu* | With a full sense |
| Geonges geanothe geomres | Of young mournful fear |
| *Jam jamque* | Immediately |
| Secgan soth, | Express the truth, |
| Nalles leas thæt him | Unless that to him should be false |
| Symle wæs *Euthenia.* | What always has been prosperity. |
| Oftor en fylste | Often his aid |
| Æne en ethle. | When alone in his country. |
| Ec thon the se is | And then this that is |
| Yfol ongesæd | Imposed as evil |
| *Etiam nusquam* | Also never |
| Ne sceal ladigan | Shall oppress him |
| *Labor quem tenet* | Whom labor holds |
| *Encratea.* | And moderation. |
| Ac he ealne sceal | But he shall all help |
| *Boethia* biddan georne, | Diligently implore, |
| Thurh his modes gemind | Thro' his mind's reflection |
| *Micro in cosmo ;* | In his little world ; |
| Thæt him Drihten gyfe | That to him the Lord would give |
| *Dinamis* en eorthan, | Power on earth, |
| *Fortis factor ;* | the mighty maker ; |
| Thæt he forth simle. | That he should live for ever. |

The following poem exemplifies all the peculiarities of the Anglo-Saxon poetry, with that intermixture of Latin which gratified the age of Edgar :—

| | |
|---|---|
| Thænne gemiltsath the ; | Then may he pity thee ; |
| *Mundum qui regit,* | He who rules the world, |
| Theoda Thrym Cyninge, | The glorious King of nations, |
| *Thronum sedentem,* | Sitting on his throne, |
| Abutan ende : | Without end : |
| Sæle wine, | A happy soul, |
| Geunne the on life : | May he give thee in life : |
| *Auctor pacis ;* | The author of peace ; |
| Sibbe gesæltha. | Peace and prosperity. |
| *Salus mundi,* | May the salvation of the world, |
| Metod se mæra, | The Great Creator, |
| *Magnâ virtute,* | With his mighty strength, |
| And se soth fæsta | And the true and constant |
| *Summi Filius,* | Son of the Highest, |

BOOK IX.

| | |
|---|---|
| Fo on fultum; | Take thee under his aid; |
| *Factor cosmi,* | The framer of the universe, |
| Se on æthelre wæs | He that was from the noble |
| *Virginis partu* | Virgin's parturition |
| Clæne acenned | Purely born |
| *Christus in orbem;* | Christ into this earth; |
| Metod thurh Marian, | The Creator thro' Mary, |
| *Mundi redemptor;* | the Redeemer of the world; |
| And thurh thæne Halgan Gast | And thro' the Holy Ghost |
| *Voca frequenter.* | Frequently invoke. |
| Bide helpes hite, | Ask his help, |
| Clemens Deus: | The Merciful God: |
| Se onsended wæs | He that was sent |
| *Summo de throno,* | From his highest throne, |
| And thære dænan, | And to her announced, |
| *Clarâ voce,* | With a clear voice, |
| The gebyrd boda | The messenger of the nativity, |
| *Bonâ voluntate:* | With a good will: |
| Thæt heo scolde cennan | That she should bring forth |
| Christum Regem: | Christ the King: |
| Ealra Cyninga Cyninge: | Of all Kings the King: |
| *Casté vivendo.* | By living chastely. |
| And thu tha soth fæstan | And thou the just one |
| *Supplex rogo;* | I humbly supplicate; |
| Fultumes bidde fricolo | For the desired aid I pray |
| *Virginem almam,* | The gentle Virgin, |
| And thær æfter to | And after her to |
| *Omnes Sancti* | All the Saints |
| Blith mod bidde | With a blithe mind I supplicate |
| *Beatus et justus,* | Blessed and just, |
| Thæt hi ealle the | That they all thee |
| *Unicâ voce* | With one voice |
| Thingian to theodne | May address the Sovereign |
| *Thronum regentem,* | Ruling on his throne, |
| Æcum Drihtne, | The everlasting Lord, |
| *Alta polorum,* | On the summit of the poles, |
| Thæt he thine saule | That he thy soul, |
| *Summus Judex,* | The supreme Judge, |
| Onfo freolice | May freely receive, |
| *Factor Æternus,* | The Eternal Framer, |
| And the gelæde | And lead thee |
| *Lucem perhennem,* | To the perennial light, |
| Thær eadige | Where the blessed |
| *Animæ sanctæ* | Holy souls |
| Rice restat, | Rest in their dominion, |
| Regna cœlorum.[27] | The kingdom of the heavens. |

The paraphrastical character of the poetical efforts of our ancestors—of what they wrote as poetry, and

[27] MSS. Cap. x. Cantab. Wanley, p. 147.

considered to be such — will very strikingly appear from the following composition on the different sentences of the Pater Noster: —

*Our Father.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Thu eart ure Fæder, | Thou art our Father, |
| Ealles Wealdend, | Governor of all, |
| Cyninc en Wuldre, | The King in Glory, |
| Fortham we clyprath. | Therefore we call Thee. |
| To the ere biddath. | To Thee ever pray. |
| Nu thu ythost miht | Now might thou most easily |
| Sawle alysan. | The soul redeem. |
| Thu hig sændest ær | Thou before didst send her |
| Thurh thine æthelan hand | Thro' thy noble hand |
| Unto thain flœsce: | Into the body: |
| Ac hwar cymth heo nu | And where cometh she now |
| Buton thu, Engla God! | But from Thee, God of Angels! |
| Eft hig alyse | Again redeem her, |
| Sawle of synnum | The soul from sins, |
| Thurh thine sothan miht. | Thro' Thy true power. |

*Who art in heaven.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Thu eart en heofonum, | Thou art in the heavens, |
| Hiht and frofor: | Our hope and refuge: |
| Blissa beorhtost! | Brightest of bliss! |
| Ealla abugath to the, | All things bend to Thee, |
| Thinra gasta thrym. | To the glory of Thy spirit. |
| Anre stæfne | With one voice |
| Clypiath to Criste. | They call to Christ. |
| Cwethath ealle thus, | All thus exclaim, |
| Halig eart thu: halig! | Holy art Thou: the Holy One! |
| Heofon engla Cyninge! | King of the angels of heaven! |
| Drihten ure! | Our Lord! |
| And thine domas synd | And Thy judgments are |
| Rihte and rume: | Righteous and large: |
| Ræcth efne gahwam | They rule eternally every where |
| Æghwilcum menagen gewyrhta. | In the multitude of thy works. |
| Wel bith tha the wyreth | Well is that when thy will |
| Willan thinne. | Worketh for Thee. |

*Hallowed be thy name.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Swa is gehalgod | So be hallowed |
| Thin heah nama; | Thy lofty name; |
| Swithe mærlice! | Very grandlike! |
| Manegum gereordum! | In many languages! |
| Twa and hund seofontig. | Two and seventy. |
| Thæs the secgath bec | This the books say, |

BOOK IX.

| | |
|---|---|
| Thæt thu, engla God, | That Thou, the God of angels, |
| Ealle gesettest, | Appointest all, |
| Ælcere theode, | In every nation, |
| Theow and wisan, | The servile and the wise, |
| Tha wurthiath thin weorc, | That they honour thy work, |
| Wordum and dædum. | By words and in deeds. |
| Thurh gecynd clypiath, | Throughout nature they call on thee, |
| And Crist heriath, | And Christ praise, |
| And thin lof lædath, | And Thy love extol, |
| Lifigenda God! | O God of the living! |
| Swa thu eart geæthelod | Thus thou art ennobled |
| Geond ealle world. | Over all the world. |

## *Thy kingdom come.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Cum nu and mildsa, | Come now and be benign, |
| Mihta Waldend! | O mighty Governor! |
| And us thin rice alyf, | And grant to us Thy kingdom, |
| Rihtwis dema! | Righteous Judge! |
| Earda selost! | The happiest on earth! |
| And ece lif | And eternal life, |
| Thar we sib and lufu | Where we peace and love |
| Samod gometath: | Together may find: |
| Eagena beorhtnyt, | Brightness of the eyes, |
| And ealle mirhthe. | And all mirth. |
| Thor bith gehyred | There be heard |
| Thin halige lof, | Thy holy praise, |
| And thin micele miht, | And thy great might, |
| Mannum to frofre | The comfort to man, |
| Swa thu, engla God! | As thou, God of angels! |
| Eallum blissast. | Blessest all. |

## *Thy will be done.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Gewurthe thin willa, | Be thy will done, |
| Swa thu Waldend eart. | As thou art the Governor. |
| Ece geopenod | Be it for ever spread |
| Geond ealle world. | Over the wide world. |
| And thu the silf eart | And as Thou Thyself art |
| Sothfæst dema, | The Righteous Judge, |
| Rice ræd bora, | The potent Counsellor, |
| Geond rumne grund, | Over the spacious ground, |
| Swa thin heah setl is | So is thy high throne |
| Heah and mære, | Lofty and great, |
| Fæger and wurthlic; | Fair and dignified; |
| Swa thin Fæder worhte; | As thy Father made it, |
| Æthele and ece. | Noble and everlasting. |
| Thar thu on sittest | There Thou sittest |
| On thære swithran healf. | At the right hand. |
| Thu eart Sunu and Fæder; | Thou art Son and Father; |

Ana ægther swa
Is thine æthela gecynd
Micclum gemærsod.
And thu monegun helpst;
Ealra cyninga thrym
Clypast ofer ealle.
Bith thin wulder word
Wide gehyred,
Thonne thu thine fyrde
Fægere geblissast.
Sylest miht and mund

Micclum herige;
And we thanciath
Thusend e fela
Eal engla thryn!
Anre stæfne.

Both thus one
Is Thy noble nature
Magnified by many.
And Thou helpest multitudes;
The glory of all kings,
Thou speakest over all.
Be the word of thy majesty
Widely heard,
Then Thou thy hosts
So beautiful wilt bless.
Thou givest might and protection

To many crowds;
And we thank
A thousand times,
Thou glory of all angels!
With one united voice.

## *As it is in heaven.*

Swa the en heofonum!
Heah thrymnesse!
Æthele and ece!
A thanciath
Clæne and gecorene
Cristes thegnas.
Singath and biddath,
Sothfæstne God,
Are and gifnesse
Ealre theode.
Thonne thu him tithast,
Tyr eadig cyningc!
Swa thu eadmod eart;
Ealre worulde
Sy the thanc and lof,
Thinre mildse
Wuldor and willa.
Thu gewurthod eart
On heofonrice,
Heah Casere.

So Thee in the heaven!
O exalted glory!
The noble and the Eternal!
For ever thank
The pure and chosen
Thegns of Christ.
They sing and pray,
Their true and constant God,
The honor and grace
Of all nations.
This thou permittest to them,
O happy King of glory!
As thou art condescending;
From all the world
Be to thee thanks and praise,
For thy mercy's
glory and good will.
Thou art established
In the heavenly kingdom,
The lofty Cæsar.

## *So on earth.*

And on eorthan
Ealra cyninga
Help and heafod!
Halig læce!
Rede, and rihtwis,
Rum heort hlaford!
Thu ge æthelodest
The ealle gesceafta,

And on earth
of all kings
The help and the head!
Holy Physician!
Counsellor, and righteous!
Lord of the enlarged heart!
Thou ennoblest
All creatures for Thyself,

BOOK IX.

And to syndrodest hig
Siththan on manega.
Sealdest ælce gecynd
Agene wisan;
And a thine mildse
Ofer manna bearn.

And hast separated them
Afterwards into many kinds.
Thou givest to each species
To be its own nature;
And for ever Thy mercy
Is over the children of men.

## *Our daily bread.*

Swa mid sibbe sænst
Urne hlaf dæghwamlice.
Duguthe thinre
Rihtlice dælest
Mete thinum mannum;
And him mare gehætst,

Æfter ferth sithe,
Thines Fæder rice
That wæs en fruman,
Fægere gegearwood;
Earda selost.
And ece lif,
Gif we soth and riht
Symle gelæstath.

So with peace mayest thou send
Our loaf daily.
From Thy dignity
Righteously Thou dividest
Meat to thy servants;
And to them still greater hast promised,
After their departure,
Even Thy Father's kingdom,
That was in the beginning
Beauteously prepared;
Happiest of earth.
And eternal life,
If we truth and right
Shall always pursue.

## *Give us this day.*

Syle us to dæg, Drihten,
Thine mildse and mihta,
And ure mod gebig,
Thane and theawas,
On thin gewil.
Bewyrc us en heortan
Haligne gast on innan,
And us fultum sile,
Thæt we mouton wyrcan
Willan thinne,
And the betæcan
Tyr eadig cyninge!
Sawle ure
On thines selfes hand.

Give to us, Lord, to-day,
Thy mercy and might,
And our mind incline,
Both thanes and theows,
To Thy will.
May Thy Holy Spirit within us
Act on us in the heart,
And grant us Thine aid,
That we may perform
Thy will,
And commit to Thee,
O happy King of Glory!
Our souls
Into Thine own hand.

## *And forgive us our trespasses.*

Forgif us ure synna
Thæt us ne scamige eft,

Drihten ure!
Thonne Thu en dome sitst.
And ealle men
Up ariseth,

Forgive us our sins,
That they may not again disgrace us,
Our Lord!
When Thou in judgment sittest,
And all men
Shall rise up,

The fram wite and fram were
Wurdan acænned.
Beoth tha gebrosnodon eft
Ban mid than flæsce
Ealle an sunde
Eft geworden.
Thar we swuttollice
Siththan oncnawath
Eal thæt we geworhton
On woruld rice,
Betere and wyrse.
Thar beoth buta geara;

Ne magon we
Hit na dyrnan,
For tham the hit
Drihten wat;
And thar gewitnesse
Beoth wuldor micele,
Heofen waru,
And eorth waru,
Hel waru thridde.
Thon beoth egsa
Geond ealle world.
Thar man us tyhhath
On dæg twegen eardas,
Drihtenes are,
Oth the deofeles theowet;
Swa hwather we geearniath
Her on life tha hwile,
The ure nihta
Moste wæron.

That from punishment and fines
We may be born to be.
They who have dissolved
Bone with flesh
All quite entire
Shall again be made.
Then we manifestly
Shall afterwards know
All that we have done
In the world's kingdom,
Better and worse.
There shall we be without disguise;
Nor may we
It at all conceal;
For this reason that it
The Lord will know;
And witnesses there
Will be, in great glory,
The citizens of heaven,
Earth's citizens also,
And hell, a third class.
Then will be dread
Over all the world.
There to us will be decreed
A day of two worlds,
Honor with the Lord,
Or servitude to devils;
As we shall either earn
Here while in life,
When our nights
Should be the greatest.

*As we forgive those who trespass against us.*

Ae thonne us alysath,
Lifigende God!
Sawle ure,
Swa we her gifath
Earmon mannum
The with us agilt.

But then redeem us,
O living God!
In our souls,
As we here give
To the poor men
That against us offend.

*And lead us not into temptation.*

And na us thu ne læt
Lathe beswican
On costnunga,
Cwellan and bærnan
Sawle ure,
Theah we sinna fela
Didon for ure disige.

And do not thou let us
Be hatefully misled
Into temptation,
To kill and burn
Our souls,
Tho' we many sins
Have done thro' our folly.

BOOK IX.

| | |
|---|---|
| Dæges and nihtes. | Days and nights. |
| Idele spræce, | In idle speech, |
| And unriht weorc, | And unrighteous conduct, |
| Thine bodu bræcon. | We have broken thy commandments. |
| We the biddath nu, | We now pray of Thee, |
| Ælmihtig God! | Almighty God! |
| Are and gifness. | Honor and grace. |
| Ne læt swa heanlice | Nor let so wretchedly |
| Thin hand geweorc, | Thy hand-work, |
| On ende dæge | On the day of the end |
| Eal forwurthan! | Be all destroyed! |

*But deliver us from evil.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Ac alys us of yfeli. | But rescue us from evil. |
| Ealle we bethurfen | We all need |
| Godes gifnesse. | The grace of God. |
| We agylt habbath | We have transgressed |
| And swithe gesingod. | And greatly sinned. |
| We the, sothfæstan God! | We thee, O righteous God! |
| Hæriath and lofiath, | Magnify and praise, |
| Swa thu hælend eart, | As Thou art the Saviour, |
| Cynebearn gecydd, | The royal child announced, |
| Cwycum and deadum; | To the living and the dead; |
| Æthele and ece, | The noble and eternal one, |
| Ofer calle thinge. | Over all things. |
| Thu miht on anre hand | Thou couldest on one hand |
| Eathe befealdan | Easily have thrown down |
| Ealne middar eard. | All this middle earth. |
| Swilc is mære cyninge. | Such is the Great King. |

*Amen.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Sy swa thu silf wilt, | Be it as Thou thyself willest, |
| Sothfæst dema! | O righteous Judge! |
| We the engla God | We the God of angels |
| Ealle heriath, | All praise, |
| Swa thu eart gawurthod | As Thou wilt be honored |
| A on worlda forth. | Henceforth for ever. |

We will close this branch of our subject of the poetical composition of our Anglo-Saxons with another remarkable instance of its paraphrastic character, hardly indeed retaining any other semblance of poesy than the metre of the lines, and this continuous periphrasis; which, however, exhibits an ingenious fertility of amplification, as well as much laudable piety. It is their metrical Gloria Patri.

### *Glory be*

Sy the, wulder and lof
Wide geopnod
Geon ealle theoda;
Thanc and willa,
Mægen and mildse,
And ealles modes lufu;
Sothfæstna sib
And thines silfes dom
World gewlitegod.
Swa thu wealdan miht
Eall eorthan mægen,
And uplifte wind;
And wolcna wealdest
Ealle on riht.

To Thee, be wonder and praise
Wide expanded
Over all the earth;
Thanks and willingness,
Strength and mercy,
And the love of every mind;
Steadfast peace
And thine own judgments
Framed in the world.
So mayest Thou govern
Every power on earth,
And the wind of the upper air;
And Thou rulest the sky
All with righteousness.

### *To the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

Thu eart frofra Fæder,
And feorh hyrda,
Lifes laththeow,
Leohtes wealdend,
Asundrod fram sinnum;
Swa thin sunu mære,
Thruh clæne gecynd,
Cyninc ofer ealle,
Beald gebletsod;
Boca lareow,
Heah hige frofre.

Thou art the Father of comfort,
And the Spirit's guardian,
The leader of life,
The governor of light,
Apart from all sins;
So thy great Son,
Through his pure nature,
King over all,
Hath blessed the constant;
Our book teacher,
The mind's high refuge.

### *As it was in the beginning.*

Swa wæs en fruman
Frea mancynnes,
Ealre worlde,
Wlite and freofre,
Clæne and cræftig;
Thu gecyddest
Thæt tha Thu ece God;
Ana geworhtest,
Thurh halige miht,
Heofenas and eorthan,
Eardas and uplyft,
And ealle thinc;
Thu settest on foldan
Swithe fela cynna,
And to syndrodost hig
Siththan on manega.
Tha geworhtest,

As he was in the beginning
The Lord of mankind,
Of all the world,
Beauteous and consoling,
Pure and skilful;
Thou didst announce
That Thou art the eternal God;
Thou alone didst frame;
Through holy might,
The heavens and earth,
Countries and the superior air,
And all things;
Thou placest on the ground
Very many races,
And didst separate them
Afterwards, in their multitudes.
Thou didst make,

BOOK IX.

| | |
|---|---|
| Ece God! | Everlasting God! |
| Ealle gesceafta | All creatures |
| On six dagum; | In six days; |
| Seofothan thu gerestest | On the seventh Thou ceased |
| Thin fægere weorc, | Thy beautiful work, |
| And Thu sunnan dæg | And Thou the Sunday |
| Silf halgodest; | Thyself didst hallow; |
| And Thu mærsodest hine | And thou magnified it |
| Manegum to helpe. | For a help to many. |
| Thone heahan dæg | This high day |
| Healdath and frithiath, | Observe and keep peaceful |
| Ealle tha the cunnon; | All that know Thee; |
| Cristene theawas, | The Christian customs, |
| Haligne heort lufan, | The heart's holy love, |
| And thæs hihstan gebod, | And this highest precept, |
| On Drihtenes naman; | In the Lord's name; |
| And se dæg is gewurthod. | And the day is honoured. |

*Is now, and ever shall be.*

| | |
|---|---|
| And nu symle | And now for ever |
| Thine sothan weorc, | Thy true work, |
| And thine micele miht, | And thy vast might, |
| Manegum swutelath; | Is manifest to many; |
| Swa thine cræftas | So thy skill |
| Hig cythath wide | They widely declare |
| Ofer ealle world, | Over all the world, |
| Ece standath | Eternally will stand |
| Godes hand geweorc. | God's hand-work. |
| Groweth swa thu hete. | It grows as Thou hast commanded. |
| Ealle the heriath | All praise Thee |
| Halige dreamas, | With holy joy, |
| Clænre stefne, | With pure voice, |
| And Cristene bec, | And Christian book, |
| Eal middan eard; | In all this middle earth; |
| And we men cwethath, | And we then express, |
| On grunde her, | On the ground here, |
| Gode lof and thanc, | Good praise and thanks, |
| Ece willa, | With everlasting will, |
| And thin agen dom. | And by thine own decree. |

*World without end.*

| | |
|---|---|
| And en worulda world | And in the world for ever |
| Wunath and rixath | Will dwell and rule |
| Cyninc innan wuldre, | The King in glory |
| And his tha gecorenan | And his chosen |
| Heah thrymnesse; | In exalted dignity; |
| Halige gastas, | Holy Spirits, |
| Wlitige englas; | Beauteous angels; |

| | |
|---|---|
| And wuldor gife, | And in grace and glory, |
| Sothe sibbe, | In true peace, |
| Sawla thancung, | With thanksgiving of souls, |
| Modes mildse. | And pitying mind. |
| Thar is seo mæste | There is the greatest one. |
| Lufu haligdomes. | Of love of holyness, |
| Heofonas syndon, | The heavens are, |
| Thurh thine ecan word, | Thro' thine eternal word, |
| Æghwer fulle. | Every where full. |
| Swa synd thine mihta, | So are thy mighty powers, |
| Ofer middan eard, | Over this middle earth, |
| Swutole and gesyne, | Manifest and seen, |
| Thæt thu hig silf worhtest. | Which thou Thyself exertest. |

*Amen.*

| | |
|---|---|
| We thæt sothlice secgath, | We this truly say, |
| Ealle thurh clæne gecynd, | All thro' a purified nature, |
| Thu eart cyninc on riht, | Thou art the righteous king, |
| Clæne and cræftig; | Pure and skilful; |
| Thu gecyddest thæt, | Thou didst declare, |
| Tha Thu, mihtig God, | That Thou, mighty God, |
| Man geworhtest; | Wouldest make man; |
| And him ondydest | And to him thou didst infuse |
| Orth and sawle; | Breath and soul; |
| Sealdest word and gewitt, | Thou gavest him language and wit, |
| And wæstma gecynd; | And natural fertility; |
| Cyddest thine cræftas; | Thou didst declare thy skill; |
| Swilc is Christes miht. | Such is the power of Christ.[28] |

MSS. Cap. x. Cantab. and Wanley, p. 146—148.

[28] It is among the MSS. of the College of Corpus Christi at Cambridge; and see Wanley's Catalogue, p. 110. For more information on the Anglo-Saxon poetry, I refer the reader with great pleasure to Mr. J. J. Conybeare's Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, collected and published since his death by his brother. I do not coincide in all the translations, but I feel the value of the researches, and the talent in both the brothers which the work displays.

Mr. W. Conybeare has added an arranged catalogue of all the extant relics of Anglo-Saxon poetry under the following heads: — I. Narrative poetry derived from historical or traditional sources. This comprises the Beowulf; the fragment on the battle of Finsburgh, first published by Hickes, and the fragment on the death of Beorhtnoth, printed by Hearne in his Johan. Glaston. Chron. Mr. J. J. Conybeare's translations of these are inserted. — II. Narrative poetry derived from scriptural sources, as Judith; and Cædmon's paraphrase. — III. Narrative poetry derived from the lives of saints, comprising the life and passion of St. Juliana, and the visions of the hermit Guthlac, both in the Exeter MS. but never published. — IV. Hymns, and other sacred poems which he enumerates. — V. The odes and epitaphs in the Saxon chronicle. — VI. Elegiac poetry, of which the editor mentions only one specimen, in the Song of the Exile, besides what may be ranked as of this kind in Alfred's Boetius. — VII. Moral and didactic poetry, in which the latter work takes the lead. — VIII. Miscellaneous. The specimens which Mr. J. J. Conybeare and his brother have brought to light from the Exeter MS., as already noticed, are important and interesting; and the value of some has been enhanced by the poetical paraphrases which accompany their Latin translations.

## CHAP. IV.

*On the* Anglo-Saxon *Versification.*

BOOK IX.

The best Saxon scholars have confessed that the versification of the vernacular poetry of our ancestors was modelled by rules which have not been fully explored. But the passage before quoted from Bede[1] shows that it had really no other rule than the poet's ear. To combine his words into a rythmical cadence was all he aimed at. A few specimens will enable the reader to see what this cadence usually was.

In Alfred's Boetius, part of the specimens before translated stand thus:—

Eala thu scippend
Scippa tungla
Þeronef and eorthan
Thu on heah setle
Ecum miclast
Ánd thu ealne hræthe
Þefon ymbhpeappeft
Ánd thuph thine
Þaligre mihte
Tungla genedeft
Thæt he the to hepath

Spylce seo sunne
Speartra nihta
Thiostro adpærceth
Thuph thine meht
Blacun leoht
Beophte steoppan
Mona gemetgath
Thuph thinra meahta sped
Þpilum eac tha sunnan
Sinef bepeapath
Beophtan leohtef.

Boet. 154.

The little poem which was cited from the Saxon Chronicle is the following:—

Tha peapth eac adpæfed
Deopmod hæleth
Orlac of eapde
Ofa ytha gepealc
Ofer gano tef bæth

Lamol feax hæleth
Wif and pord sunttor
Ofer hæterra gethping
Ofer hpæles æthel
Þama bepeafod.

The next lines may be cited because of their riming tendency:—

[1] See before, p. 233.

Thaᴛ peaꝛth æᴛýpeð
Uppe on þoðepum
Sᴛeoþþa ou ꝛᴛathole
Thohe ꝛᴛiᴛh fæþhᴛhe
Þæleth hiȝe ȝleape
Þatath piðe
Cometa be naman
Cþæfᴛ ȝleape men
Wiꝛe ꝛothboþan.[2]

The versification of Cædmon's paraphrase translated in p. 275. has a similar cadence. It begins

Uꝛ iꝛ þiht micel
Thæt þe þoðepa peaþð
Weþeða puldoþ cyniȝ
Woþðum hepiȝen
Moðum lupien
Þe iꝛ mæȝna ꝛpeð
Þeaꝼoð calþa
Þeah ȝeꝛceaꝼta
Fþea Ælmiȝhtiȝ.

Cæd. p. l.

In Judith the versification is of the same species, which is taken from the description of the battle (see the English before, p. 274.):—

Tha peaᴛth ꝛnellþa peþoð
Snuðe ȝeȝeapepoð
Cenþa to campe
Sᴛopon cýnepoꝼe
Secȝaꝛ anð ȝeꝛiᴛhaꝛ
Bæþon thuꝼaꝛ
Foþon to ȝeꝼeohᴛe
Foþᴛh on ȝeþihᴛe
Þæleth unðeþ helmum
Oꝼ thæþe hahiȝan býþiȝ
On thæt ðæȝneð
Sýlꝼ ðýneðan ꝛcilðaꝛ
Þluðe hlumnon
Thæþ þe hlanca ȝeꝼeah
Mulꝼ in palðe
Änð þe panna hpeꝼn
Wæl ȝiꝼþe ꝼuȝel
Weþᴛan beȝen
Tha him tha theoð ȝuman
Tholiᴛon tilian
Fýlle on fæȝum
Äc him ꝼleah on laꝛᴛ
Eaþn æteþ ȝeoþn
Uþiȝ ꝼeᴛhepa
Salopiȝ paða
Sanȝ hilðe leoᴛh
Þýpneð nebba.

Jud. p. 24.

The description of Beowulf's sailing and landing is thus given: —

Cpæᴛh he Luᴛhcýniȝ
Oꝼeþ ꝛpan naðe
Se cean polðe
Mæþne theoðen
Tha him pæþ manna theaþꝼ
Thone ꝛiᴛhfæᴛ him
Snoᴛepe ceoþlaþ
Lýᴛ hpon loȝon
Thæm the him leoꝼ pæpe. —
Secȝ ꝛȝaðe
Laȝu cpæfᴛiȝ mon
Lanð ȝemýþcu
Fýþþᴛ ꝼoþᴛh ȝepaᴛ ꝼloᴛa
Wæþ on ýᴛhum
Baᴛ unðeþ beoþȝe
Beoþnaþ ȝeappe
On ꝛᴛefn ꝛᴛiȝon ꝛᴛpeamaþ. —
Lepaᴛ tha oꝼeþ pæȝ holm
Winðe ȝefýfeð
Floᴛa fann healþ
Fuȝle ȝelicoþᴛ
Oᴛh tha ýmb an ᴛið

[2] Sax. Chron. 123.

BOOK IX.

Othþeƿ boʒoþeƿ
Wunden ſteƿna
Leþaða hæfde.
Tha tha lichenðe
Lanð ʒeſapon
Bþim cliffu blican
Beorhʒaſ ſteape
Siðe fæ næſſaſ.—
Thanon up hþathe
Weðepa leoðe
On panʒ ſtiʒon
Sæ puðu fældon
Sýþcon hþýſeðon
Liuth ʒepæðo
Loðe thancedon
Thæſ the him ýthlaðe
Eathe þnþðon.

It appears to me that the only rule, or rather habit, of the Saxon versification which we can now discover is, that the words are placed in that peculiar rythm or cadence which is observable in all the preceding extracts. This rythm will be felt by every one who reads the following lines:—

Thohtcon tilian
Fýlle on fætum —
Uþiʒ fæthepa
Salopiʒ paða —
Woþðum hepiʒen
Moðum luþien —
Þeaþoð ealþa
Þeah ʒeſceafta
Fþea Ælmihtiʒ. —

To produce this rythm seems to have been the perfection of their versification. But, happily for the strength of their poetry, they extended their rythm sometimes into a more dignified cadence, as

Wepeða puiðop cýniʒ —
Ymthe heolſtep ſceaðo —
Thuph thinþa mealtra ſpeð.—

When their words would not fall easily into the desired rythm, they were satisfied with an approach to it, and with this mixture of regular and irregular cadence all their poetry seems to have been composed.

By this rythm, by their inversions of phrase, by their transitions, by their omissions of particles, by their contractions of phrase, and, above all, by their metaphors and perpetual periphrasis, their poetry seems to have been distinguished.

That they occasionally sought rime and alliteration cannot be doubted, for we have some few Anglo-Saxon

poems in rime.[3] But neither of these formed its constituent character, nor was any marked attention given to the prosodical quantity of their syllables, as Hickes supposed.[4]

[3] Mr. J. Conybeare remarked, in the Exeter MS., the contents of which he first brought to our general knowledge, one Anglo-Saxon poem, entirely written in rime, with alliteration, Introd. xiv. His brother has inserted it with a translation, p. xviii—xxv. In some others he remarks that it occurs only in part, as in the extract which he has cited from the poem on the Day of Judgment, which has the following rimed passage: —

Thæt nu manna ȝehpylc
Cpic thenden hep panath
Leceopan mot
Spa helle hiepthu
Spa heopenep mæpthu;
Spa leohte leoht;
Spa tham latham niht;
Spa thpymmep thpæce,
Spa thpýpra præce;
Spa mid Dpihten dream,
Spa mid deoplecm hpem;
Spa pite mid ppathum,
Spa puldop mid apum;
Spa lipe, ppa death,
Spa him leope bith. Ibid.

That now every man
who dwells here alive,
May choose
Either wounds of hell,
Or the majesty of heaven;
Or the bright light,
Or the hateful night;
Or the power of glory,
Or the vengeance of darkness;
Or joy with the Lord,
Or mourning with devils;
Or punishment with wrath,
Or glory with honours;
Or life, or death,
Which ever he loves most.
Ibid. p. xxvi.

[4] I am willing to concur with Mr. J. Conybeare, that alliteration was used in Saxon poetry. The examples in his introductory essay show it, p. viii., but I think it was an occasional beauty, not as in Pierce Ploughman, the fundamental principle. His opinion on the versification of the Saxon poetry deserves to be quoted; he thinks it belongs to the trochaic or dactylic species. It is to a metre of this kind, in which emphasis holds the place of quantity, that I would refer the verses of the Anglo-Saxons. They will be found to consist, for the most part, of feet of two or three syllables, each having the emphasis on the first, and analogous therefore to the trochee or dactyl, sometimes perhaps to the spondee of classic metre. Introd. xi. Mr. Bosworth has inserted Mr. Rask's opinion on this subject in his Anglo-Saxon Grammar. But Bede's statement, which I observed, and have quoted before in p. 233., gives us an Anglo-Saxon's own decisive information on this disputed subject.

## CHAP. V.

### *Their Latin Poetry.*

BOOK IX.

Origin of their Latin Poetry.

THE Latin poetry of the Anglo-Saxons originated from the Roman poetry, and was composed according to the rules of Roman prosody. Its authors were all ecclesiastics, who had studied the classical writers and their imitators; and who followed, as nearly as their genius would permit them, the style and manner of classical composition. Sometimes they added a few absurd peculiarities, dictated by bad taste, and sometimes they used rime. But in general the regular hexameter verse was the predominant characteristic of their poems.

The origin of their Latin poetry may be therefore easily explained. With the works of the classical writers we are all acquainted. As the Roman empire declined, the genius of poetry disappeared. Claudian emitted some of its departing rays. But after his death it would have sunk for ever in the utter night of the Gothic irruption, if the Christian clergy had not afforded it an asylum in their monasteries, and devoted their leisure to read and to imitate it.

The Romans had diffused their language as their conquests and colonies spread; but it would have also perished when the Gothic irruptions destroyed their empire, if the Christian hierarchy had not preserved it. The German tribes who raised new sovereignties in the imperial provinces were successively converted to Christianity; and as the new faith chiefly emanated

from Rome, one religious system pervaded the western part of Europe. The public worship was every where performed in Latin. All the dignified clergy and many others were perpetually visiting Rome. The most accessible and popular works of the fathers of the church were in the Latin language. And this was the only tongue in which the ecclesiastics of Germany France, Britain, Spain, Ireland, and Italy could compose or correspond in to be understood by each other. Hence every ecclesiastic in every part of Europe, who aspired to any intellectual cultivation or distinction, was obliged to learn the Latin language, and to write in it. From this circumstance, they nourished a necessary attachment to the Latin authors; and thus the Latin language and the classical writers were preserved by the Christian clergy from that destruction which has entirely swept from us both the language and the writings of Phœnicia, Carthage, Babylon, and Egypt.

Many of the clergy wrote homilies, or disputatious treatises; some aspired to history, and some were led to cultivate poetry. In the fourth century, Victorinus, Juvencus, and Prudentius distinguished themselves by poems in Latin verse on devotional subjects. In the fifth century, Sedulius, Dracontius, and Sidonius, with others, cultivated Latin poetry. In the next age appeared Alcimus, Arator, Columbanus, and the prolific Venantius Fortunatus. Every subsequent century enumerated many ecclesiastical poets, who all alike fashioned both their genius and their works from the classical models, or their imitators. They chose, indeed, subjects more suited to their sacred profession; but they strove, according to their best abilities, to give their religious efforts all the style and the measures of the standard poetry of ancient Rome.

BOOK IX.

The Anglo-Saxons who wrote Latin poetry drank from the same Heliconian spring, and used the same prosody; and of course their Latin poetry originated from the Latin poetry of the ecclesiastics who had preceded them, and their classical models.

But though the prosody of the classical poetry furnished these writers with their metres, yet, as they were in a ruder and less cultivated age, their taste was too unformed and irregular to keep to the chaste style of the Augustan bards. They undervalued the excellence to which they were familiar, and sometimes they strove to improve it by beauties of their own; beauties, however, often perceptible only to the eye or the ear of a barbaric taste.

Some of their grotesque ornaments are mentioned in the fifth century by Sidonius. He notices some verses which were so composed as to admit of being read either backward or forward. Thus:—

Roma tibi subito motibus ibit amor.

and

Sole medere pede, ede perede melos.[1]

He has also given to us a specimen of another fantastic effort in two verses, of which he asks his friend to admire the disposition of the syllables:

Præcipiti modo quod decurrit tramite flumen,
Tempore consumptum jam cito deficiet.

These, if read backward, will give

Deficiet cito jam consumptum tempore flumen,
Tramite decurrit quod modo precipiti!

The poem of Proba Falconia, a poetess of the fourth century, was also constructed very whimsically. Her subjects were, the history of the creation, the deluge,

[1] Sid. Ap. lib. ix. ep. 14.

and Christ. She narrates these histories in centos from Virgil, who knew nothing about them. She has so curiously selected above seven hundred of his lines, and so placed them, that, with the aid of titles to the different portions, the principal events of these Scripture histories are described in the words of the Mantuan bard.[2]

Aldhelm's Latin Poetry:

Our Anglo-Saxons display occasional exertions of the same depraved taste in their Latin poetry; of which the most ancient that has descended to us consists of the compositions of Aldhelm, who died in 709; and will be noticed again in the chapter on their literature. His verses, from the study of better models, are preferable to his pompous prose. His poetical works which remain are entitled De Laude Virginum, De Octo principalibus Vitiis, and Ænigmata.

his De Laude Virginum.

Towards the close of his prose treatise on Virginity, he stated that he should write on the same subject in poetry. His preface to the poem is an acrostic address to the abbess Maxima, in hexameter verse. It consists of thirty-eight lines, so fantastically written that each line begins and ends with the successive letters of the words of the first line; and thus the first and last lines and the initial and final letters of each line consist of the same words. In the last line the words occur backwards. The final letters are to be read upwards.

Aldhelm calls this, quadratum carmen, a square verse. He was not the inventor of these idle fopperies of versification. Fortunatus and others had preceded Aldhelm in this tasteless path, in which authors endeavour to surprise us, not by the genius they display, but by the difficulties which they overcome.

[2] Bib. Mag. tom. viii. p. 708—716.

BOOK IX.

M etrica Tirones nunc promant carmina casto S
E t laudem capiat quadrato carmine virg O
T rinus in arce Deus, qui pollens secla creavi T
R egnator mundi, regnans in sedibus alti S
I ndigno conferre mihi dignetur in æthr A
C um sanctis requiem, quos laudo versibus isti C
A rbiter altithronus qui servat sceptra supern A
T radidit his cœli per ludum scandere lime N
I nter sanctorum cuneos qui laude perenn I
R ite glorificant moderantem regna tonante M
O mnitenens Dominus, mundi formator et aucto R
N obis pauperibus confer suffragia cert A
E t ne concedas trudendos hostibus istin C
S ed magis exiguos defendens dextera tanga T
N e prædo pellax cœlorum claudere lime N
V el sanctos valeat noxarum fallere scen A
N e fur strophosus foveam detrudat in atra M
C onditor a summo quos Christus servat Olymp O
P astor ovile tuens ne possit tabula rapto R
R egales vastans caulas bis dicere pup pu P
O mnia sed custos defendat ovilia jam nun C
M axima præcipuum quæ gestat numine nome N
A ddere præsidium mater dignare precat U
N am tu pepetuum promisisti lumine lume N
T itan quem clamant sacro spiramine vate S
C ujus per mundum jubar alto splendet ab ax E
A tque polos pariter replet vibramine fulme N
R ex regum et princeps populorum dictus ab æv O
M agnus de magno, de rerum regmine recto R
I llum nec mare nec possunt cingere cœl I
N ec mare navigerum spumoso gurgite valla T
A ut zonæ mundi que stipant æthera cels A
C larorum vitam qui castis moribus isti C
A uxiliante Deo vernabant flore perenn I
S anctis aggrediar studiis dicere paupe R
T anta tamen digne si pauper præmia proda T
O mnia cum nullus verbis explanat apert E
S otsac animrac tnamorp cnun senorit acirte M.[3]

The poem is not divided into books or chapters. It consists of two thousand four hundred and forty-three hexameter lines, the last eight of which are rimed; the four first alternately, the others in couplets. We subjoin them: —

Quis prius in spira morsum glomeravit inertem
Idcirco cursim festinat credere Christo

[3] Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 3.

Agnoscens propriam tanta virtute salutem
Insuper et meritum cumulavit sanguinis ostro,
Præmia sumpturus cum cœli cœtibus almis.
Candida post sequitur cum binis martyra sertis,
Integritas nitidam, nec non et passio rubram
Plumabant pariter macta virtute coronam.[4]

The first twenty-two lines of the poem are an invocation to the Deity. The translations of the passages which we select, as specimens of his powers, are made as literal as possible.

Almighty Father! Sovereign of the world!
Whose word the lucid summits of the sky
With stars adorn'd, and earth's foundations fram'd;
Who ting'd with purple flowers the lonely heath;
And check'd the wandering billows of the main,
Lest o'er the lands the foamy waves should rage
(Hence rocks abrupt the swelling surge controul)!
Thou cheer'st the cultured fields with gelid streams;
And with thy dropping clouds the corn distends:
Thine orbs of light expel night's dreary shade;
Titan the day, and Cynthia tends the night:
From thee what tribes the fields of ocean roam,
What scaly hosts in the blue whirlpools play!
The limpid air with fluttering crowds abounds,
Whose prattling beaks their joyful carols pour,
And hail thee as the universal Lord:
Give, Merciful! thine aid, that I may learn
To sing the glorious actions of thy saints.[5]

* * * * * * *

[4] Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 19.

[5] Omnipotens genitor mundum ditione gubernans
Lucida stelligeri qui condis culmina cœli,
Nec non telluris formas fundamina verbo:
Pallida purpureo pingis qui flore vireta:
Sic quoque fluctivagi refrenas cærula ponti,
Mergere ne valeant terrarum littora lymphis,
Sed tumidos frangunt fluctus obstacula rupis:
Arvorum gelido qui cultus fonte rigabis,
Et segetum glumas nimbosis imbribus auges,
Qui latebras mundi geminato sidere demis;
Nempe diem Titan et noctem Cynthia comit.
Piscibus æquoreos qui campos pinquibus ornas,
Squamigeras formans in glauco gurgite turmas
Limpida prœpetibus, sic comples aera catervis,
Garrula quæ rostris resonantes cantice pipant
Atque creatorem diversa voce fatentur.
Da prius auxilium, clemens, ut carmina possim
Indita Sanctorum modulari gesta priorum.
Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 3.

BOOK IX.

I seek not rustic verse, nor court the Nine[6],
Nor from Castalia's nymphs their metres ask,
Said erst to guard the Heliconian hill.
Nor, Phebus ! need I thy loquacious tongue,
Whom fair Latona bore on Delos' isle —
I'll rather press the thunderer with my prayers,
Who gave to man the lessons of his word ;
Words from the WORD I ask, whom David sang,
Sole offspring of the Father ; and by whom
Th' Almighty Sire created all we know ;
So may their gracious inspiration deign
To aid their feeble servant in his lay.

He opens his subject by telling us that there are three descriptions of persons to whom the praise of chastity belongs : the married who live virtuously ; the married who live as if they were single ; and they who keep in the virgin state. After above an hundred lines in praise of virginity, he proceeds to describe forty-five characters who distinguished the state which he prefers ; and this biographical panegyric forms the substance of his poem. Most of his applauded personages are only known in the calendars of the Romish church. Some of his images, commonplaces, and examples, shall be quoted.

Amid his wild and diffuse panegyric on virginity, the following images occur : —

Now let my verses cull the rarest flowers,
And weave the virgin crowns which grace the good ;
What can more charm celestials in our conflict,
Than the pure breast by modest virtue ruled ? [7]
* * * * * * *

[6] Non rogo ruricolas versus, et commata musas
Non peto Castalidas metrorum cantica nymphas
Quas dicunt Helicona jugum servare supernum,
Nec precor, ut Phœbus linguam sermone loquacem
Dedat, quem Delo peperit Latona creatrix —
Sed potius nitar precibus pulsare Tonantem,
Qui nobis placidi confert oracula Verbi,
Verbum de verbo peto, hoc Psalmista canebat,
Corde patris genitum, quod proles unica constat,
Quo pater Omnipotens per mundum cuncta creavit.
Sic patris et prolis dignetur Spiritus almus
Auxilium fragili clementer dedere servo.

[7] Nunc igitur raros decerpant carmina flores
E quis virgineas valeant fabricare coronas
Quid plus cælicolas juvat in certamine nostro
Quam integritatis amor regnans in pectore puro ?

The chaste who blameless keep unsullied fame
Transcend all other worth, all other praise;
The spirit high-enthroned has made their hearts
His sacred temple.[8]
* * * * * * *
For chastity is radiant as the gems
Which deck the crown of the Eternal King:
It tramples on the joys of vicious life,
And from the heart uproots the wish impure.
The yellow metal which adorns the world
Springs from the miry chambers of the earth:
So the pure soul, its image, takes its birth
From carnal passions of terrestrial love.
And as the rose excels the Tyrian dyes,
And all the gaudy colours work'd by art;
As the pale earth the lucid gem creates
In rustic soils beneath the dusty glebe;
As yellow flowers shoot gaily from the corn,
When spring revives the germinating earth:
So sacred chastity, the dear delight
Of all the colonies of heaven, is born
From the foul appetites of worldly life.[9]
* * * * * * *
And as the vine, whose spreading branches, bent
With stores immense, the dresser's knife despoils,
Exists the glory of the fruitful fields;
And as the stars confess th' all-glorious ray,
When in his paths oblique the sun rolls round,
Transcending all the orbs which grace the poles:
So Chastity, companion of the bless'd,
Excelling, meekly, every saintly worth,

[8] Virginitas castum servans sine crimine carmen,
Cætera virtutum vincit præconia laude;
Spiritus altithroni templum sibi vindicat almus.

[9] Virginitas fulget lucens, ut gemma coronæ,
Quæ caput æterni præcingit stemmate regis:
Hæc calcat pedibus spurcæ consortia vitæ:
Funditus extirpans petulantis gaudia carnis.
Auri materiem fulvi, obrizumque metallum
Ex quibus ornatur præsentis machina mundi,
Glarea de gremio prodidit sordida terræ.
Sic casta integritas auri flaventis imago
Gignitur e spurca terreni carne parentis.
Ut rosa Puniceo tincturas murice cunctas
Coccineosque simul præcellit rubra colores.
Pallida purpureas ut gignit glarea gemmas,
Pulverulenta tegit quas spurci glebula ruris;
Ut flos flavescens scandit de cortice corni
Tempore vernali, dum promit germina tellus:
Sic sacra virginitas cœlorum grata colonis
Corpore de spurco sumit primordia vitæ.
Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 4.

BOOK IX.

Is hail'd the queen of all the virtues here.[10]
* * * * * * *
The chastity which rules the virtuous frame,
A virgin flower which blooms unhurt in age,
Falls not to earth, nor sheds its changing leaves.
Behold the lilies waving in the fields,
The crimson rose, sweet blushing on the bank,
Which crowns the conquering wrestler, and becomes
The garland for the victor in the course:
So purity, subduing rebel nature,
Wins the fair diadem which Christ awards.[11]
* * * * * * *
The peacock's many-colour'd plumage waves,
And the soft circles glow with Tyrian dyes:
Its tawny beauties, and its graceful form
Surpass the proudest labours of our skill.[12]

We may add from the same poem his description of the destruction of paganism, as exhibiting the degree of his powers of poetical composition: —

Not Mars, the lord of wounds, who scatters round
The seeds of war, and fills the rancorous heart
With Gorgon poisons, can assist his fanes;
Nor Venus can avail, nor her vile boy.
The golden statues of Minerva fall,
Tho' fools proclaim her goddess of the arts;

10 Vinea frugiferis ut constat gloria campis,
Pampinus immensos dum gignit palmite botros,
Vinitor exspoliat frondentes falcibus antes:
Sidera præclaro cedunt ut lumina soli,
Lustrat dum terras obliquo tramite Titan,
Cuncta supernorum convincens astra polorum:
Sic quoque virginitas quæ sanctos indita comit,
Omnia sanctorum transcendans præmia supplex
Integritas quoque virtutum regina vocatur.
Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 4.

11 Integritas animæ regnans in corpore casto
Flos est virgineus, qui nescit damna senectæ.
Nec cadit in terram ceu fronde ligustra fatiscunt.
Cernite fecundis ut vernent lilia sulcis,
Et rosa sanguineo per dumos flore rubescat.
Ex quibus ornatus qui vincit forte palestris,
Accipit in circo victor certamine serta.
Haud secus integritas devicta carne rebelli.
Pulchras gestabit Christo regnante coronas. Ibid.

12 Quanquam versicolor flavescat penna pavonis
Et teretes rutilent plus rubro murice cycli,
Cujus formosa species et fulva venustas
Omnia fabrorum porro molimina vincit.
Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 4.

Nor he for whom, as ancient fictions sing,
The leafy vines their precious branches spread,
Can prop the columns nodding with their gods.
The marbles tremble with terrific crash,
And the vast fabric rushes into dust.
Ev'n Neptune, rumour'd sovereign of the waves,
Who by his swelling billows rules the main,
He cannot save his sculptured effigies,
Whose marble brows the golden leaves surround,
Not ev'n Alcides, who the centaurs crush'd,
And dared the fiery breath of prowling Cacus,
When from his throat his words in flames were poured,
Tho' his right hand the dreadful club may grasp,
Can shield his temples when the Christian prays.[13]

One other example will be a sufficient specimen of his De Laude Virginum. Two sisters were condemned for refusing to sacrifice to idols. One was punished first in the presence of the other, with the hope that her constancy might be affected by her sister's suffering. Instead of this event, Secunda's speech is thus represented by Aldhelm: —

Firmly she said, "Secunda ne'er will tremble;
Bring all your blood-stain'd tortures to oppress me,
Your fires, your swords, your scourges red with gore,
Your clubs, your cords, your stones that pour like hail;
Bring all your cruel instruments of pain;
Yet, conqu'ring my tormentors, will I triumph.

[13] Non Mars vulnificus qui belli semina spargit;
Rancida Gorgoneis inspirans corda venenis
Delubri statuis potuit succurrere parmis.
Nec Venus, aut Veneris prodest spurcissima proles.
Aurea sternuntur fundo simulacra Minervæ,
Quamque deam stolidi dixerunt arte potentem:
Nec Bacchus valuit, cui frondent palmite vites,
Ut referunt falso veterum figmenta librorum,
Numine nutantes fani fulcire columnas.
Sed titubant templi tremebundis marmora crustis.
Et ruit in præceps tessellis fabrica fractis.
Neptunus fama dictus regnator aquarum;
Qui regit imperium ponti turgentibus undis,
Falsas effigies, quas glauco marmore sculpunt,
Aurea seu fulva quas ornant petala fronte,
Haud valuit veterum tunc sustentare deorum.
Alcides fertur Centauri victor opimus,
Flammea qui pressit latronis flamina Caci,
Quamvis fumosis ructaret flabra loquelis.
Herculis in crypta sed torquet dextera clavam
Nec tamen in templo rigida virtute resultat,
Quæ famulus Christi supplex oramina fudit.
Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 12.

BOOK IX.

As many means of death you fiercely frame,
So many crowns in heav'n's bright plains will bless us."[14]

His poem "De Octo principalibus Vitiis," or on the eight principal vices, opens with an allusion to the preceding poem: —

Thus have I sung the praises of the saints,
Whose fame re-echoes round the concave sky.
Now must the verse the mighty battles paint,
Waged by the vices; which from virgin tribes
Withhold the kingdoms of celestial joy,
And shut the portals of their lucid walls.[15]

This poem contains four hundred and fifty-eight Latin hexameters. After an introduction of some length, it treats of the eight vices in this order: gluttony, luxury, avarice, anger, despair, slothfulness, vain-glory, pride. It closes with a diffuse peroration.

His allegorical introduction begins with these lines: —

The crowding legions gather to the war,
Justice' fair friends, and virtue's holy troops;
'Gainst these the vices fix their camps malign,
And whirl their thickening spears of basest deeds.
The rival combat glows, the banners float,
And the loud clangor of the trumpet roars.[16]

On luxury he exclaims: —

Indecent words from this base monster spring,
From him scurrility and folly's gibes;

[14] Nam constanter ait, "nunquam tremebunda Secunda:
Adfer cuncta simul nobis tormenta cruenta;
Ignes et macheras et rubras vibice virgas,
Restes et fustes et dura grandine saxa.
Quot tu pœnarum genera crudeliter infers,
Ast ego tanta feram victo tortore tropæa,
Quot tu concinnas crudi discrimina lethi
Tot nos in supera numerabimus arce coronas."
Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 18.

[15] Digestis igitur sanctorum laudibus almis,
Quorum rumores sub cœli culmine flagrant;
Restat, ut ingentes depromant carmina pungas,
Ex vitiis procedentes, virtutibus atque
Virginibus Christi, quæ cœli regna negabunt,
Florida lucifluæ claudentes liminia portæ. Ibid. p. 19.

[16] Ecce catervatim glomerant ad bella phalanges,
Justitiæ comites et virtutum agmina sancta,
His adversantur vitiorum castra maligna,
Spissa nefandarum quæ torquent spicula rerum,
Æmula ceu pugnat populorum pugna duorum,
Dum vexilla ferunt et clangit classica salpix. Ibid. p. 19.

Love, frivolous deceiver! and excess.
Oh what illustrious men! how great, how many!
Has this fierce enemy thrust down to hell!
Yet could he not, though mask'd in beauty's shape,
From Joseph tear the excelling palm of virtue;
When the voluptuous net the fair one wove,
He spurn'd her charms, and from his garment fled;
By this he well deserved the throne of Memphis.[17]

His declaration on avarice is in these phrases: —

Next avarice leads the war, and heads a band
Of dense array, conductress of the fight;
She not alone the public streets pervades
With blood-stain'd arms, and shafts in poison dipp'd.
Her base companions follow — frauds and thefts,
A thousand lies, and actions false and vile;
Base appetites of gain, and perjuries throng:
The hosts of rapine, stain'd with every crime,
Heedless of oaths, join in an ardent band.[18]

His first verses on anger are: —

Ferocious wrath the fourth battalion calls,
And, always raging, hurries to the fight;
He breaks the pious peace of brother's love,
And goads their jarring minds to mutual war;
Hence impious slaughters — hence the shouts of rage —
And gnashing indignation clamours loud.[19]

17 Ex hoc nascuntur monstro turpissima verba,
Nec non scurrilitas et scævo ludicra gestu,
Frivolus, et fallax amor, ac petulantia luxus.
O quantos qualesve viros, et laude celebres,
Hæc Bellona ferox sub tristia Tartara trusit!
Non sic egregium virtutis perdere palmam
Forma venustatis valuit compellere Joseph,
Qui dominam sprevet nectentem retia luxus,
Et stuprum fugiens pepli velamina liquit:
Idcirco felix meruit Memphitica sceptra.
Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom xiii. p. 20.

18 Post Philargyria producit tertia bellum, —
Hæc ductrix pugnæ stipatur milite denso.
Non sola graditur per publica strata pedestris,
Arma cruenta ferens et spicula lita veneno.
Hæc comites pravos, itidem mendacia mille,
Fraudes et fures, ac falsis frivola gestis,
Appetitus turpis lucri et perjuria inepta,
Atque rapinarum maculatos crimine questus,
Conglobat in cuneum cum falsis testibus ardens. Ibid.

19 Ast vero quartam trux congregat ira catervam,
Quæ semper furibunda cupit discrimina belli:
Et ciet ad pugnam mentes discordia fratrum,
Dum copulata piæ disrumpit fœdera pacis.
Ex hoc nascuntur cædes cum strage nefandæ
Et clamor vocis, simul indignatio frendens. Ibid.

BOOK IX.

On vain-glory he exclaims : —

How the false thief his lying promise pours,
To darken all the solid bliss of life !
And can it not suffice that this fair world,
Which round the pole in devious motion glides,
Exists to gratify all human needs ?
Must heav'nly honours earth's frail children grasp ?
What crimes, what wrong, to wretched mortals spring
From the vain passion of transcendent fame ![20]

His Ænigmata may be next considered. Its poetical prologue presents to us a curious instance of that fantastic and difficult versification which some men in former times pursued. Both the beginning and the final letters of the thirty-six hexameters which compose it, present to us, in succession, one of this sentence : " Aldhelmus cecinit millenis versibus odas."

A rbiter, ætherio Jupiter qui regmine sceptr A
L ucifluum que simul cœli regale tribuna L
D isponis, moderans æternis legibus illu D
H orrida nam multans torsisti membra Behemot H
E x alto quondam rueret dum luridus arc E
L impida dictanti metrorum carmina præsu L
M unera nunc largire : rudis quo pandere reru M
V ersibus ænigmata queam clandestina fat U.
S i Deus indignis tua gratis dona rependi S
C astalidas nymphas non clamo cantibus istu C
E xamen neque spargebat mihi nectar in or E,
C inthi sic nunquam perlustro cacumina, sed ne C
I n Parnasso procubui, nec somnia vid I.
N am mihi versificum poterit Deus addere carme N
I nspirans stolidæ pia gratis munera ment I.
T angit si mentem, mox laudem corda rependun T
M etrica : nam Moysen declarant carmina vate M
J am dudum cecinisse celebris vexilla tropæ I
L ate per populos inlustria, qua nitidus So L
L ustrat ab Oceani jam tollens gurgite ... L
E t Psalmista canens metrorum carmina voc E

[20] O quam falsa latro spondebat frivola mendax,
Ut concessa rudis fuscaret munera vitæ,
Nonne satis foret, ut quadro cum cardine mundus,
Quem vertigo poli longis anfractibus ambit,
Usibus humanis serviret rite per cœvum,
Infula terrenos ni cœli comat alumnos ?
Heu scelus, heu facinus, miseris mortalibus ortum !
Et hoc ex vana præsertim gloria fretus !
Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 21.

N atum divino promit generamine nume N
I n cœlis prius exortum, quam Lucifer orb I
S plendida formatis fudisset lumina sæcli S.
V erum si fuerint bene hæc ænigmata vers U
E xplosis penitus nevis et rusticitat E
R itu dactilico recte decursa nec erro R
S eduxit vana specie molimina menti S;
I ncipiam potiora; seu Deus arida serv I,
B elligero quondam qui vires tradidit Jo B,
V iscera perpetui roris si repleat haust U.
S iccis nam laticis duxisti cautibus amne S
O lim, cum cuneus transgresso marmore rubr O
D esertum penetrat: cecinit quod carmine Davi D
A rce poli genitor servas qui secula cunct A
S olvere jam scelerum noxas dignare nefanda S.[21]

These ænigmata consist of twenty tetrasticha, or stanzas of four lines, on various subjects; as the earth, the wind, clouds, nature, the rainbow, the moon, fortune, salt, the nettle, and such like—of fourteen pentasticha of five lines, of thirteen hexasticha of six lines each, nineteen stanzas of seven lines, ten of eight lines, eleven of nine lines, and thirteen of ten lines each.

In the collection of Boniface's letters, there is a singular Latin poem in rime, entitled the poem of Aldhelm, Carmen Aldhelmi.

As the rimes of this composition are more remarkable than its poetry, I will cite the first few lines, with a prose translation in the notes:—

Lector caste catholice
Atque obses athletice
Tuis pulsatus precibus
Obnixe flagitantibus
Hymnista carmen cecini
Atque responsa reddidi
Sicut pridem pepigeram
Quando profectus fueram
Usque diram Domnoniam
Per carentem Cornubiam
Florulentis cespitibus
Et fœcundis graminibus
Elementa inormia
Atque facta informia
Quassantur sub ætherea
Convexa cœli camera
Dum tremit mundi machina
Sub ventorum monarchia.
Ecce nocturno tempore
Orto brumali turbine
Quatiens terram tempestas
Turbabat atque vastitas
Cum fracti venti fœdere
Baccharentur in æthere

[21] Maxima Bib. Vet. Patr. tom. xiii. p. 23.

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Et rupto retinaculo
Desævirent in sæculo.[22]

This poem contains two hundred and four lines in this measure.

But Aldhelm is also remarkable for having given us a direct testimony of the use of rime in England before the year 700. In his treatise "De Laudibus Virginitatis," he says—

"It may be expressed not unsuitably in rimed verse (Carmine rythmico):

Christus passus patibulo,
Atque læti latibulo;
Virginem virgo virgini
Commendabat tutamini." [23]

This clear and decisive testimony destroys the favourite system of our men of letters, that the use of rime in Europe came from the Arabs in Spain. Aldhelm used it before they entered Spain; and the ancient Welsh bards long before Aldhelm.

Latin poetry of Bede.

Our venerable Bede attempted Latin poetry, but the Muses did not smile upon his efforts. His compositions comprise some hymns, some elegiac poetry and the life of St. Cuthbert in hexameter verse.

This Life consists of a preface and forty-six chapters, which include nine hundred and seventy-nine lines. It has little other merit than that of an Anglo-Saxon labouring at Latin prosody in the dark period of the seventh century. It has not the vigour or the fancy which occasionally appear in Aldhelm's versification; and therefore a few passages only will be quoted.

[22] "Chaste catholic reader, and strenuous friend; urged by your prayers, earnestly intreating me, I have composed a poem, and returned an answer, as I formerly agreed to do, when I went to dismal Devonshire, through Cornwall, void of flowering turfs and fruitful grass. The vast elements are shaken under the æthereal convex chamber of the sky, while the machine of the world trembles under the monarchy of the winds. Lo! in the night, when the wintry whirlwind has risen, the tempest shakes the earth, and desolation terrifies; when the bursting winds rage in the air, and, having broken through their confinement, madden on the earth."

[23] Aldhelm De Laud. s. 7. p 297. Whart. ed. 1693. See further on this subject the Essays on Rime in the Archeologia, vol. xiv. p. 168—204.

He begins in this humble style: —

That many lights should shine in every age,
T' illume the loathsome shades of human night
With his celestial flame, the Lord permits:
And tho' our light supreme is Christ divine,
Yet God has sent his saints with humbler rays
To burn within his church. With sacred fire,
Love fills their minds, and Zeal inflames their speech.
He spreads his numerous torches thro' the world,
That the new rays of burning faith, diffused
With starry virtues, every land may fill.[24]

His invocation is much inferior to Aldhelm's: —

Spirit Supreme! from whom all gifts proceed,
Aid me; for none can fitly sing thy grace
Without thy help. Oh, thou! who tongues of flame
Erst gave, now send the treasures of thy word
To him who sings thy gifts![25]

The following legend is selected as a specimen of the general style of the narration: —

The youth now bent beneath a sudden pain[26],
And led his languid footsteps with a pine.

[24] Multa suis Dominus fulgescere lumina seclis
Donavit, tetricas humanæ noctis ut umbras
Lustraret divina poli de culmine flamma.
Et licet ipse deo natus de lumine Christus
Lux sit summa, Deus sanctos quoque jure lucernæ
Ecclesiæ rutilare dedit, quibus igne magistro
Sensibus instet amor, sermonibus æstuat ardor,
Multifidos varium lychnos qui sparsit in orbem.
Ut cunctum nova lux fidei face fusa sub axem
Omnia sidereis virtutibus arva repleret. Smith's Bede, p. 268.

[25] Tu, rogo, summe, juva, donorum spiritus auctor,
Te sine nam digne fari tua gratia nescit.
Flammivomisque soles dare qui nova famina linguis
Munera da verbi linguæ tua dona canenti. Ibid. p. 263.

[26] Parvulus interea subiti discrimine morbi
Plectitur, atque regit vistigia languida pino.
Cumque die quadam sub divo fessa locasset
Membra dolens solus mitis puer, ecce repente
Venit eques niveo venerandus tegmine, nec non
Gratia cornipedi similis, recubumque salutat,
Obsequium sibi ferre rogans. Cui talia reddit,
"Obsequiis nunc ipse tuis adsistere promptus
Vellem, ni diro premeretur compede gressus.
Nam tumet ecce genu, nullis quod cura medentum
Tempore jam multo valuit mollire lagonis."
Desilit hospes equo, palpat genu sedulus ægrum,
Sic fatus: "Similæ nitidam cum lacte farinam
Olla coquat pariter ferventis in igne culinæ.
Hacque istum calida sanandus inunge tumorem."
Hæc memorans conscendit equum, quo venerat, illo

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When on a day as in the air he placed
His weary limbs, and meek yet mourning lay,
A horseman clothed in snowy garments came,
And graceful as a courser : — He saluted
The youth reclined, who offered his obeisance.
" My prompt attentions should be gladly paid
To you — if grievous pains did not withhold me :
See, how my knee is swell'd — no leech's care
Thro' a long lapse of time has soothed the evil."
Straight leaped the stranger from his horse, and strok'd
The part diseased, thus counselling : " The flour
Of wheat and milk boil quickly on the fire,
And spread the mixture warm upon the tumour."
Remounting then he took the road he came ;
And Cuthbert used his medicine, and found
That his physician from th' exalted throne
Of the Supreme had come, and eased his pain,
As with the fish's gall he once restored
The light to poor Tobias.

There are some hymns of Bede remaining. The hymn on the year deserves our peculiar notice, as it shows that he also used rime, and gives additional support to that column of evidence which enabled me to trace the use of rime into the fourth century.

The first part of the hymn on the year consists of a few hexameters, some of which seem to have been meant to rime. These are succeeded by fifty-eight lines, which correctly rime in couplets, and which are not hexameters. They are not worth a translation, being only curious for their rimes. I add the first twelve,

Annus solis continetur quatuor temporibus,
Ac deinde adimpletur duodecim mensibus.
Quinquaginta et duabus currit hebdomadibus
Trecentenis sexaginta atque quinque diebus.
Sed excepta quarta parte noctis atque diei
Quæ dierum superesse cernitur serie.
De quadrante post annorum bis binorum terminum,
Calculantes colligendum decreverunt bissextum.

Calle domum remeans. Monitus medicina secuta est,
Agnovitque sacer medicum venisse superni
Judicis a solio summo, qui munere clausos
Restituit visus piscis de felle Tobiæ. Smith's Bede, p. 269, 270.

Hinc annorum diversantur longe latitudines
Quorum quidam embolismi, quidam fiunt communes,
Brevis quippe qui vocant communis lunaribus
Solis semper duodenis terminatur mensibus.
Longus autem qui omnino embolismus dicitur
Lunæ tribus atque decem cursibus colligitur
Brevioris anni totus terminatur circulus
Trecentenis quinquaginta ac quatuor diebus,
Longus vero lunæ annus in dierum termino
Continetur trecenteno, octogeno, quaterno.[27]

In the same poem he frequently makes his hexameters rime.

In another part of the same poem he introduces a series of middle rimes; as, —

Adventum domini, non est celebrare Decembri,
Post ternas nonas, neque quintas ante calendas,
Pascha nec undenas, Aprilis ante calendas,
Nec post septenas, Maias valet esse calendas,
Virgo puerperio, dedit anno signa secundo,
Illius magni cycli, modo bis revolvit . . . .
Triginta que duos, quingentos qui tenet annos,
Illius angelici, dantes paschalia cycli,
Qui constat denis, annis simul atque novenis.[28]

The comma marks the position of the middle rime. He adds thirty-six more lines of this sort.

We have also of Bede's a long poem on the martyr Justin. The beginning may be given to show its form.

Quando Christus Deus noster
Natus est ex virgine
Edictum imperiale
Per mundum insonuit,
Quatenus totius orbis
Fieret descriptio.
Nimirum quia in carne
Tunc ille apparuit.[29]

Latin Poetry of Boniface.

Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon who went a self-devoted missionary to Germany, and, after converting one hundred thousand from their idolatry, was

[27] Bedæ Opera, tom. i. p. 476. That Bede had observed the middle, or what have been called Leonine rimes, is clear from his adducing one as a specimen how poets use the figure Homæoteleuton: —

"Poetæ hoc modo;
Pervia divisi, patuerunt cærula ponti." Tom. i. Op. p. 62.

[28] Ibid. p. 485. Simeon Dun., p. 96., quotes a long poem of Bede, on the day of judgment, in hexameter Latin verse.

[29] Ibid. tom. iii. p. 367.

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murdered in 755, attempted poetry. Some of the verses which he subjoined to his epistolary correspondence yet remain to us. In the following, the middle lines represent an acrostic of the name of the friend to whom he writes. It is in Latin *rimes*. The acrostic begins when he mentions his friend's name:

Vale frater, florentibus
Juventutis cum viribus:
Ut floreas cum Domino
In sempiterno solio
Qua martyres in cuneo
Regem canunt æthereo
Prophetæ apostolicis
Consonabunt et laudibus
*N*itharde nunc nigerrima
*I*mi cosmi contagia
*T*emne fauste Tartarea
*H*æc contra hunc supplicia
*A*lta que super æthera
*R*imari petens agmina
*D*ominum quæ semper choris
*V*erum comunt angelicis.
Qua rex regum perpetuo
Cives ditat in sæculo
Iconisma sic cherubin
Ut et gestes cum seraphin
Editus apostolorum
Filius prophetarum
Summa sede ut gaudeas
Unaque simul fulgeas
Excelsi regni prœmia
Lucidus captes aurea
In que throno æthereo
Christum laudes preconio.[30]

On another occasion he closes a letter to pope Gregory with six complimentary hexameters.[31] Boniface is once called by a contemporary the client of Aldhelm.[32]

Of Leobgitha.

Among the correspondents of Boniface we find some poets. LEOBGITHA, an Anglo-Saxon lady, closes a letter to him with these four verses, which are curious, for being *rimed* hexameters;

Arbiter omnipotens, solus qui cuncta creavit
In regno patris, semper qui lumine fulget.
Quia jugiter flagrans, sic regnet gloria Christi
Illæsum servet semper te jure perenni.[33]

Th' Almighty Judge, who in his Father's realms
Created all, and shines with endless light,
May he in glory reign, and thee preserve
In everlasting safety and delight.

She introduces these verses with a letter, of which a few paragraphs may be selected. "I ask your clemency to condescend to recollect the friendship which

[30] Maxima Bib. Patrum, xiii. p. 70. They contain nothing worth translating.
[31] Ibid. p. 126. [32] Ibid. p. 93. [33] Ibid. p. 83.

some time ago you had for my father. His name was Tinne; he lived in the western parts, and died about eight years ago. I beg you not to refuse to offer up prayers to God for his soul. My mother desires also to be remembered to you. Her name is Ebbe. She is related to you, and lives now very laboriously, and has been long oppressed with great infirmity. I am the only daughter of my parents, and I wish, though I am unworthy, that I may deserve to have you for my brother; because in none of the human race have I so much confidence as in you. I have endeavoured to compose these under-written verses according to the discipline of poetical tradition, not confident with boldness, but desiring to excite the rudiments of your elegant mind, and wanting your help. I learnt this art from the tuition of Eadburga, who did not cease to meditate the sacred law."

Of Cæna.

CÆNA, an Anglo-Saxon archbishop, another of the correspondents of the German missionary, annexes to a letter which he wrote to Lullus six lines, which are hexameters, but *rime* in the middle of each line:

Vivendo felix Christi laurate triumphis
Vita tuis, seclo specimen, charissime cœlo,
Justitiæ cultor, verus pietatis amator,
Defendens vigili sanctas tutamine mandras
Pascua florigeris pandens prædulcia campis
Judice centenos portans venienti maniplos.[34]

There is no more of his poetry extant.

Of Ethilwald.

ETHILWALD, the friend and pupil of Aldhelm, was also a poet in this period. There is a letter from Aldhelm to his beloved son and pupil Æthilwald yet extant. There is another from the disciple to his master, conceived in terms of great affection and respect, in which he says that he has sent three poems in two different species of poetry; one in heroic verse, the hexameter and pentameter, in se-

[34] Maxima Bib. Pat. xiii. p. 111.

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venty verses; another not formed on quantity, but consisting of eight syllables in every line, and one and the same letter, adapted to similar cross paths of lines; the third made in similar lines of verses and syllables, on the transmarine journey of Boniface.[35]

There are no poems immediately subjoined to the letter, but within three pages some poems follow which seem to be some of those described by Æthilwald. We infer this, because the last purports by its contents to be written by Æthilwald[36], and the one preceding it speaks of Aldhelm[37], as if it were addressed to him. Both are in the singular sort of verse above described.

This singular versification seems to be a peculiar alliteration, which these passages illustrate: —

Summum satorem solia
Sedet qui per æthralia—
Cuncta cernens cacumine
Cœlorum summo lumine —
Sacro sancta sublimiter
Suffragans manus fortiter.—
Caput candescens crinibus
Cingunt capilli nitidis : —
Curvato colli cervicem
Capitis atque verticem,
Titubanti tutamina
Tribuat per solamina
Neque nocet nitoribus
Nemorosis cespitibus
Ruris rigati rivulo
Roscidi roris sedulo—

These poems are more remarkable for these syllabic difficulties of versification than for any other quality, except the absence of the true poetical genius.

The rimed poems which we have cited from Aldhelm, Bede, Boniface, Leobgitha, Cæna, and Ethilwald,

[35] Maxima Bib. Pat. xiii. p. 93.

[36]
Vale, vale, fidissime,
Phile Christi charissime
Quem in cordis cubiculo
Cingo amoris vinculo —
Salutatis supplicibus
Æthelwaldi cum vocibus.

Farewell, farewell, most faithful friend, most dear to Christ; whom in the chamber of my heart I surround with the bond of love — the humble voice of Ethilwald having saluted thee. Ibid. p. 98.

[37]
Althelmum nam altissimum
Cano atque clarissimum.

For I sing Aldhelm, the most lofty and most illustrious. Ibid.

all Anglo-Saxons who wrote before and between 700 and 750, show that the use of rime was a favourite amusement among the Anglo-Saxons, at this period, in their Latin poetry.

Alcuin's Latin poetry.

Alcuin, called also Albinus, was another poet who contributed to adorn the eighth century. Some of his poems have been printed among those of Walafrid Strabo, which his editor, Du Chesne, has noticed. He has left many poetical compositions, among which his verses to Charlemagne, and his religious and moral poetry, form the principal part. He sometimes rimes, as in this poem, of which the loose measure reminds us of Swift's petition: —

Quam imprimis speciosa quadriga: homo, leo, vitulus et aquila.
Septuaginta unum per capitula colloquuntur de domino paria.
In secunda subsequuntur protinus homo, leo loquitur et vitulus
Quibus inest ordinate positus decimus atque novem numerus.[38]

Sixteen more lines follow, riming in the same manner.

The following poem we may call a religious sonnet. I quote it, because, as all the lines but two rime together at different distances, I think it an early specimen of that sort of *rime* which afterwards became improved into the sonnet:

Qui cœli cupit portas intrare patentes,
Sæpius hunc pedibus intret et ipse suis.
Hæc est perpetuæ venienti porta salutis,
Hoc est lucis iter et via jam veniæ.
Hæc domus alma Dei, hic sunt thesaura tonantis,
Sanctorum multæ reliquiæ que patrum.
Idcirco ingrediens devota mente viator,
Sterne solo membra, pectore carpe polum.
Hic Deus, hic sancti tibi spes, hic terra salutis.
Sit conjuncta tuo pectore firma fides.[39]

Who seeks to enter heaven's expanded gates,
Must oft within these sacred walls attend;
Here is the gate of ever-during bliss,
The path of light, of pardon, and of peace

[38] Alb. Opera. ed. Du Ch. p. 1686.
[39] Ibid. p. 1697.

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The house of God, the treasures of his power,
And num'rous relics of the holiest men.
With mind devoted, traveller, enter here,
Here spread your limbs, and fill your heart with heav'n;
Here sacred hopes, here God himself awaits thee,
If stedfast faith thy humble mind control.

In another poem, on a lady building a temple, who was one of the correspondents of Boniface, he mentions Ina, the Saxon king, in his way:—

A third ruler received the supreme sceptre,
Whom the nations call In with uncertain cognomen,
Who now governs by right the kingdom of the Saxons.

There is another, which seems to have been meant to rime at different distances:—

O mortalis homo mortis reminiscere casus
Nil pecude distas si tantum prospera captas.
Omnia quæ cernis variarum gaudia rerum
Umbra velut tenuis veloci fine recedunt.
Præcave non felix ne te dum nescis et audis
Quassans præcipiti dissolvat turbine finis.
Porrige poscenti victum, vel contege nudum
Et te post obitum sic talia facta beabunt.[40]

Mortal! the casualties of death remember!
If wealth alone we seek, we are but cattle.
Know! all the various joys which charm below,
Like a light-flying shade will soon depart.
Beware! lest in the hour of careless mirth
The final whirlwind shake thee into ruin.
Go, feed the hungry and the naked clothe!
Such deeds will bless thee in the grave we loathe.

Some of his poetry is pleasing. The following is his address to his cell, when he quitted it for the world[41]:—

[40] Alb. Opera. ed. Du. Ch. p. 1721.

[41] O mea cella mihi habitatio dulcis amata
Semper in æternum, O mea cella, vale.
Undique te cingit ramis resonantibus arbos
Silvula florigeris semper onusta comis.
Prata salutiferis florebunt omnia et herbis
Quas medici quærit dextra salutis ore.
Flumina te cingunt florentibus undique ripis,
Retia piscator qua sua tendit ovans.
Pomiferis redolent ramis tua claustra per hortos,
Lilia cum rosulis candida mixta rubris.

O my loved cell, sweet dwelling of my soul,
Must I for ever say, Dear spot, farewell!
Round thee their shades the sounding branches spread
A little wood with flow'ring honours gay;
The blooming meadows wave their healthful herbs,
Which hands experienced cull to serve mankind;
By thee, 'mid flowery banks, the waters glide
Where the glad fishermen their nets extend;
Thy gardens shine with apple-bending boughs,
Where the white lilies mingle with the rose;
Their morning hymns the feather'd tribes resound,
And warble sweet their great Creator's praise.
Dear cell! in thee my tutor's gentle voice
The lore of sacred wisdom often urged;
In thee at stated times the Thunderer's praise
My heart and voice with eager tribute paid.
Lov'd cell! with tearful songs I shall lament thee,
With moaning breast I shall regret thy charms;
No more thy poet's lay thy shades will cheer,
No more will Homer or thy Flaccus hail thee;
No more my boys beneath thy roof will sing,
But unknown hands thy solitudes possess.
Thus sudden fades the glory of the age,
Thus all things vanish in perpetual change.
Naught rests eternal or immutable:
The gloomy night obscures the sacred day;
The chilling winter plucks fair autumn's flowers;
The mournful storm the placid sea confounds;
Youth chases wild the palpitating stag,
While age incumbent totters on its staff.

Omne genus volucrum matutinas personat odas
Atque Creatorem laudat in ore deum.
In te personuit quondam vox alma magistri,
Quæ sacrosophiæ tradidit ore libros.
In te temporibus certis laus sancta tonantis
Pacificos sonuit vocibus atque animis.
Te mea cella modo lacrymosis plango camœnis,
Atque gemens casus pectore plango tuos.
Tu subito quoniam fugisti carmina satum,
Atque ignota manus te modo tota tenet.
Te modo nec Flaccus nec fatis Homerus habebit
Nec pueri Musas per tua tecta canunt.
Vertitur omne decus secli sic namque repente,
Omnia mutantur ordinibus variis.
Nil manet æternum, nil immutabile vere est,
Obscurat sacrum nox tenebrosa diem.
Decutit et flores subito hyems frigida pulchros
Perturbat placidum et tristior aura mare.
Quæ campis cervos agitabat sacra juventus
Incumbit fessos nunc baculo senior.
Nos miseri cur te fugitivum mundus amamus?
Tu fugis a nobis semper ubique ruens.

Alb. Opera. ed. Du Ch. p. 1731.

Ah! wretched we! who love thee, fickle world!
Thou flyest our grasp, and hurriest us to ruin.

One of Alcuin's fancies in versification was to close his second line with half of the first:

Præsul amate precor, hac tu diverte viator
Sis memor Albini ut, præsul amate precor.[42]

There are several poems, some short, others longer, in this kind of composition.

Many of Alcuin's poems are worthy of a perusal. Some exhibit the flowers of poetry, and some attempt tenderness and sensibility with effect. They are all distinguished by an easy and flowing versification. Several poems are addressed to his pupil Charlemagne, and mention him under the name of David, with a degree of affection which seldom approaches the throne. The adulation of a courtly poet, however, sometimes appears very gross, as in these lines, in which, alluding to Charlemagne's love of poetry, he ventures to address him by the venerable name of the Chian bard:

Dulcis Homere vale, valeat tua vita per ævum,
Semper in æternum dulcis Homere vale.

This appears in the same poem with two other childish lines:

Semper ubique vale, dic, dic, dulcissime David,
David amor Flacci, semper ubique vale.[43]

One of his poems consists of six stanzas, each of six lines. The two first are quoted, because this poem is very like one of the most common modes of versifying in the Anglo-Saxon poetry: —

Te homo laudet,
Alme Creator,
Pectore mente,
Pacis amore,
Non modo parva,
Pars quia mundi est.
Sed tibi sancte
Solus imago
Magna Creator,
Mentis in arce
Pectore puro
Dum pie vivit.[44]

[42] Alb. Opera. ed. Du Ch. p. 1740.
[43] Ibid. p. 1742, 1743.
[44] Ibid. p. 780.

Of the other Latin poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, little need be said. We have a few fragments of some authors, but they deserve a small degree of consideration. Malmsbury has preserved to us part of a poem made on Athelstan, probably by a contemporary, of which the only curiosity is, that it is a mixture of final rimes and middle rimes. Where the poet ceases to rime at the end of his lines, he proceeds to rime in the middle; and where he desists from middle rimes, he inserts his final ones.[45]

There is some poetry on Edgar preserved by Ethelwerd[46]; and the Vedastne MS. of the life of Dunstan contains some riming lines.[47]

[45] The twelve first lines may be quoted as a specimen:

Regia progenies produxit nobile stemma
Cum tenebris nostris illuxit splendida gemma,
Magnus Æthelstanus patriæ decus, orbita recti,
Illustris probitas de vero nescia flecti.
Ad patris edictum datus in documenta scholarum,
Extimuit rigidos ferula crepitante magistros:
Et potans avidis doctrinæ mella medullis
Decurrit teneros, sed non pueriliter annos
Mox adolescentis vestitus flore juventæ
Armorum studium tractabat, patre jubente.
Sed nec in hoc segnem senserunt bellica jura
Idquoque posterius juravit publica cura. Malmbs. lib. ii. p. 49.

[46] Ethelw. lib. iv. c. 9.

[47] Acta Sanct. May.

## CHAP. VI.

*Of the general Literature of the* ANGLO-SAXONS.

BOOK IX.

THAT every nation improves as fast as the means and causes of improvement within it, and the external agencies that are operating upon it can effect or allow, all anterior history proves; but the modes and paths of the progress of each country will be as different as its circumstances are dissimilar: in one age or state some directions will be taken peculiar to itself, and distinct from those of its predecessors or contemporaries. In their paths of excellence it may be pausing, but it will be found to be forcing other channels of its own. The movement is always either preparation for advance, or a diffusion of attained improvements, or clear and steady progression. If its career seems on some points to be questionable, or retrograde, it will, on a more scrutinising examination, be found to be decided and prosperous in others.

The Anglo-Saxon nation is an instance that may be adduced in verification of these principles. It did not attain a general or striking eminence in literature. But society wants other blessings besides these. The agencies that affected our ancestry took a different course: they impelled them towards that of political melioration, the great fountain of human improvement; and, during the period of the Anglo-Saxon dynasty, laid firmly the foundations of that political constitution, and began the erection of that great social fabric, which Danes and Normans afterwards did not overthrow, but contributed to consolidate and complete.

There were no causes in action of sufficient energy at that time to make the Anglo-Saxons a literary people. They had not, like the Gauls or Britons, the benefit of Roman instruction to educate them; for both the Roman legions and settlers had quitted the island before they came. From the Britons they could gain nothing, because assailing them as invaders, and either enslaving or exterminating them, there was no chance of any sympathy of mental cultivation. Nor were the Britons much qualified to have been their intellectual teachers. Luxury, civil factions, merciless wars with each other, and the Scotch and Irish depredations, were fast barbarising the island, while the Saxons were fighting for its occupation. The songs of the British bards were engrossed by encomiums on martial slaughter, drunken carousals, or the mystical traditions of expiring Druidism, in which but a few gleams of intelligent thought were at any time intermixed. Their historical events were twisted into the strange form of unnatural triads; and though they possessed many adages of moral wisdom and acute and satirical observation of life and manners, yet aphorisms without reasoning are but the sentences of a dictator, which impress the memory without cultivating the understanding; and even these could rarely benefit the Saxons, from the extreme dissimilarity to their own, of the language in which they were preserved. Hence, till Gregory planted Christianity in England, there were no means or causes of intellectual improvement to our fierce and active ancestors.

But Christianity was necessarily taught at first as a system of belief of certain doctrines, and of practice of certain rites and duties. The length of time requisite to inculcate and imbibe these left no opportunity for the diffusion of literature. The monks from Rome introduced some; but they had not only to bring it into the island, but to raise among the Anglo-Saxons the

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state of mind and capacity requisite to understand it, as well as the desire to attain it. No effects can take place without adequate causes. It was only among the monasteries that the new taste could be at first introduced, and among that part of the nation which devoted itself to religion. The rest neither felt the want of it, nor the value, nor had the leisure or the means of attending to it. The great majority of the population was in the working or servile state; and husbandry being imperfectly understood or practised, too much labour was required to raise the produce they needed, and too little was obtained, with all their efforts, to give that leisure and comfort without which no nation or individual will study. The higher classes being all independent, and either assailing or depredating on others, or watching and defending themselves, or pursuing their vindictive feuds, or attending their kings and chiefs in expeditions, witenagemots, and festivities, or employing their time in learning the use of arms, or in pilgrimages, penances, and superstitions, or attending county and baronial courts, performing suit and service, and transacting that frequent civil business of life which their free institutions were always creating, had as little surplus leisure for the cultivation of literature as the vassal, peasant, or the interior domestic. Their dependent jurisdictions and franchises furnished also their thegns, or barons, with continual employment. The clergy only were accessible to it; and these were, as a body, too poor to have books from which to learn it, and in their parochial villages had neither inducement nor opportunities to gain it. It was into the monasteries only that, under the circumstances of the day, the liberal studies could make any entrance. Nor at first even here. The monks were long occupied in building their churches and cloisters, and putting their ground into a state of cultivation, and of raising

from it the means of subsistence. Most of them for some time could barely do this. It was only as some became gradually affluent that they could afford to purchase manuscripts, or were at leisure to study them. Literature was not then generally wanted for preferment, business, distinction, occupation, or amusement in the world. There was too much for all classes to do and suffer. But as the more favoured monasteries acquired wealth, libraries, and leisure, some few individuals began to derive enjoyment from literature; and as fast as the means of obtaining it accrued, the taste and pursuit of it arose and was diffused. The neglect of it did not proceed from the barbarism or incapacity of the Anglo-Saxon mind, but from its energies being necessarily absorbed by more indispensable occupations.[1] Our ancestors were clever and active men in all the transactions and habits of their day, and were exerting in all their concerns as much awakened intellect as their gross system of feeding and habits of drinking permitted to be developed. We have estimated them too low, because we have too highly appreciated the general condition of Roman society, and too much compared our forefathers with ourselves. Absence of literature has been too often mistaken for absence of intellect. It is usually forgotten that illiteracy has been the general character of the mass of all people, whether Egyptian, Phœnician, Greek, or Roman, as much as of the Goths or Anglo-Saxons. In the most celebrated countries of antiquity it was a portion only, and that

[1] I observe a passage in Bede which shows that even the Anglo-Saxon clergy made their literature subservient to their business. He says, "I have known *many clerici* placed in school, for this chiefly, that they might acquire a knowledge of secular letters, which teach their auditors most studiously to seek carnal things; to contend for obtaining the glory of the world; and to learn the subtleties of syllogisms and arguments, that they may triumph over the unlearned, who are circumvented with a verbosity of this sort." Again, "As many scholars exercise themselves in *secular letters* for the love of *secular* life, so I shall exercise myself in sacred letters." Bed. Op. vol. viii. p. 1063, 1064.

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but a small one, of their population which possessed either books or literature. It is only in our own times that these are becoming the property of nations at large. When our Anglo-Saxons applied to literature they showed the strength of their intellectual powers, and a rapidity of progress that has never been surpassed. Bede, Alcuin, and Erigena may be compared with any of the Roman or Greek authors who appeared after the third century. But that within a hundred years after knowlege, for the first time, dawned upon the Anglo-Saxons, such a man as Bede should have arisen, writing so soundly on every branch of study that had been pursued by the Romans, and forming in his works a kind of cyclopedia of almost all that was then known, is a phenomenon which it is easier to praise than to parallel.

The natural direction of the Anglo-Saxon mind, when first led to study, was necessarily to religious literature, because its tuition and its tutors were of this description. To attain knowlege, it was requisite that our ancestors should become acquainted with the Latin language; and this was the first state of their intellectual progress.

When St. Augustin had entered England teaching Christianity, the pope sent to him many books, some of which are now extant in our public libraries. This missionary, and the monks who accompanied him, occasioned a desire of knowlege to spread among the Anglo-Saxons in the seventh century. In a short time afterwards, Sigebert, one of the princes of East Anglia, imbibed this feeling during his residence in France, to which he had fled from his brother Redwald. When he attained the crown of East Anglia, he established a school in his dominions for the instruction of youth, in imitation of those which he had seen among the Franks. He was assisted in this happy effort of civilisation by Bishop Felix, who came

to him out of Kent, and who supplied him with teachers from that part of the octarchy which Christianity and literature had first enlightened.[2]

At this period Ireland was distinguished for its religious literature, and many of the Anglo-Saxons, both of the higher and lower ranks, retired into it to pursue their studies or their devotions. While some assumed the monastic life, others, seeking variety of knowlege, went from one master's cell to another. The hospitable Irish received them all, supplied them with daily food, with books, and gratuitous instruction.[3]

Many persons in England are mentioned at this time by Bede as reading and studying the Holy Scriptures. To the Anglo-Saxons, as to all nations, the Jewish and Christian Scriptures must have been invaluable accessions. From these we learn the most rational chronology of the earth, the most correct history of the early states of the East, the most intelligent piety, the wisest morality, and every style of literary composition. Perhaps no other collection of human writings can be selected, which, in so moderate a compass, presents so much intellectual benefit to mankind. We shall feel all their value and importance to our ancestors, if we compare them with the Edda, in which the happiest efforts of the Northern genius are deposited.[4]

It has been mentioned, that Alfred lamented very impressively the happy times which England had known before his reign, and the wisdom, knowlege, and books which then abounded.

The period of intellectual cultivation to which he alluded began to dawn when Christianity was first planted; but was advanced to its meridian lustre

[2] Bede, iii. 18. [3] Ibid. 28.

[4] No one who has read them can put the Vedas, the Puranas, or the Zendavesta, in competition with the Scriptures, unless he has that unfortunate taste for comparative nonsense which we should lament rather than censure. The Koran has some good passages.

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towards the end of the seventh century, by two ecclesiastics, whom the pope sent into England.

About the year 668, the English archbishop, who went to Rome for the papal sanction, happening to die there, the pope resolved to supply his dignity by a person of his own choice. He selected for this purpose Adrian, an abbot of a monastery near Naples, and an African; the unambitious Adrian declined the honour, and recommended Theodore, a monk at Rome, but a native of Tarsus, the Grecian city illustrious by the birth of St. Paul. The pope approved his choice, and at the age of sixty-six, Theodore was ordained archbishop of Canterbury. His friend Adrian accompanied him to England.

Nothing could be more fortunate for the Anglo-Saxon literature than the settlement of these men in England. Both were well versed in sacred and profane literature, and thoroughly acquainted with the Greek and Latin languages. Their conversation and exhortations excited among the Anglo-Saxons a great emulation for literary studies. A crowd of pupils soon gathered round them, and, besides the Scriptures and divinity, they taught the Greek and Latin languages, astronomy, arithmetic, and the art of Latin poetry[5]; a remarkable instance of the natural affinity

[5] Bede, iv. c. 1. — We have a curious specimen how the Anglo-Saxons pronounced Greek, in their manner of repeating the Lord's Prayer in that language. In the Cotton Library a MS. has preserved this prayer in the Greek language, written in Saxon characters. It is probably a correct example of the pronunciation of Greek as introduced into England by Adrian and Theodore in the seventh century; but it certainly shows, in the division of the words, how little the writer understood of the language. I will transcribe it, placing the original by its side: —

Pater imon oyntys uranis agiastituto onomansu. elthetu ebasilia s genithito to theli mansu. os senu uranu Keptasgis tonartonimon. tonepi ussion. dos simin simero Keaffi simin. to offilemata imon oskeimis affiomen. tus ophiletas imon Kemies ininkis imas. isperas mon. ala ryse imas aptou poniru. — MS. Cott. Lib. Galba, A. 18. The character which I express by the K seems placed for Kal.

Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου. Ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου· γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν, τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον. Καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν. Καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν, ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

of the human mind for knowlege, and of the contagious sympathy with which it always spreads when neither the civil nor ecclesiastical powers oppose it.

Theodore held his archiepiscopal station twenty-one years. He appointed Adrian to the monastery of St. Peter at Canterbury, who lived there thirty-nine years; and their presence made Kent the fountain of knowlege to all the rest of England. Bede extols the happy times which the island enjoyed under their tuition, and mentions that some of their scholars were alive in his time, as well versed in the Greek and Latin tongues as in their own.[6]

Among the men to whom Anglo-Saxon literature was greatly indebted, Benedict, who founded the abbey at Weremouth, must be mentioned with applause. He went several times from England to Rome, and brought back with him an innumerable quantity of books of every description, given to him by his friends, or purchased at no small expense. One of his last instructions was to keep with care the library that he had collected, and not to let it be spoilt or scattered by negligence.[7] The importance of his attention to the arts is also noticed.

Egbert, who was archbishop of York in 712, had celebrity in his day. He was descended from the royal family of Northumbria, and is highly extolled by Malmsbury as an armoury of all the liberal arts. He founded a very noble library at York. Alcuin speaks with gratitude of this circumstance: "Give me (says he, in a letter to Charlemagne) those exquisite books of erudition which I had in my own country by the good and devout industry of my master Egbert, the archbishop." To this Egbert our Bede addresses a long letter, which remains.[8] We have one treatise of Egbert remaining: it is a series of answers to some ecclesiastical questions

[6] Bede, iv. c. 2.
[7] Bede, Hist. Abb. 293—295
[8] Bede, 305.

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Wilfrid was another benefactor to Anglo-Saxon literature, by favouring the collection of books: he also ordered the four Evangelists to be written, of purest gold, on purple-coloured parchments, for the benefit of his soul, and he had a case made for them of gold, adorned with precious stones.[9]

We have a catalogue of the books in the library at York, collected chiefly by Egbert. They consisted of the following: —

Ancient Fathers: —

| | |
|---|---|
| Jerom, | Fulgentius, |
| Hilarius, | Basil, |
| Ambrosius, | Chrysostom, |
| Austin, | Lactantius, |
| Athanasius, | Eutychius, |
| Gregory, | Clemens, |
| Leo, | Paulinus. |

Ancient classics: —

| | |
|---|---|
| Aristotle, | Lucan, |
| Pliny, | Boetius, |
| Cicero, | Cassiodorus, |
| Virgil, | Orosius, |
| Statius, | Pompeius. |

Ancient grammarians and scholiasts: —

| | |
|---|---|
| Probus, | Servius, |
| Donatus, | Pompeius, |
| Priscian, | Comminianus. |

Other poets: —

| | |
|---|---|
| Victorinus | Fortunatus[10], |
| Sedulius, | Prosper, |
| Juvencus, | Arator. |

This was the library which Alcuin calls the treasures of wisdom which his beloved master Egbert left, and of which he says to Charlemagne, "If it shall please your wisdom, I will send some of our boys, who may copy from thence whatever is necessary, and carry back into France the flowers of Britain; that the garden may not be shut up in York, but the fruits of it may be placed in the Paradise of Tours."[11]

[9] Eddius, Vita Wilf.

[10] Gale, iii. p. 730.

[11] Malmsb. i. 24—26.

The studies which were pursued at York may be also stated, as those which they who cultivated literature generally attended to.

They were,

| | |
|---|---|
| Grammar, | Astronomy, |
| Rhetoric, | and |
| Poetry, | Natural Philosophy. |

which are thus described: —

"The harmony of the sky, the labour of the sun and moon, the five zones, the seven wandering planets. The laws, risings, and setting of the stars, and the aerial motions of the sea; earthquakes; the natures of man, cattle, birds, and wild beasts; their various species and figures. The sacred Scriptures."[12]

These were the subjects of the scholastic education at York in the eighth century.

But though literature in the seventh and eighth centuries was striking its roots into every part of England, yet, from the causes already noticed, it was principally in the monasteries. The illiteracy of the secular part of society continued: even some of our kings were unable to write. Wihtred, king of Kent, about the year 700, says, at the end of a charter, "I have put the sign of the holy cross, pro ignorantia literarum[13], on account of my ignorance of writing." Among the kings of the seventh and eighth century, however, some exceptions appear: there are several letters extant from the Anglo-Saxon kings at this period[14], which show some mental cultivation. Of these sovereigns, none were more distinguished than Alfred of Northumbria, whose voluntary exile in Ireland for the sake of study, and whose literary attainments and celebrity, we have already recorded.[15] But the improvements of those who sought ecclesiastical duties must have operated with considerable effect on all who were within the circle of their influence;

[12] Gale, iii. 728.
[13] Astle's Charters, No. 1.
[14] See Mag. Bib. Pat. xvi. 64. 82, 83. 88.
[15] See our first vol. p. 333.

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they mingled with every order of society; they were everywhere respected, and often emulated.

From among the Anglo-Saxon students in the century preceding Alfred the Great, we may select for our peculiar notice, as best illustrating the literary progress of the nation, Aldhelm, Bede, and Alcuin.

Aldhelmus, as he calls himself in his Latin poems, or, as Alfred spells it, Ealdhelm [16], Old Helmet, whose poems we have noticed before, was of princely extraction; a kinsman of Ina was his father. He received his first tuition from the Adrian already noticed, and he continued his studies at Malmsbury, where Maildulf, an Irishman, had founded a monastery. He became thoroughly versed in Greek and Latin under this tutor, who, charmed by the sylvan beauties of the place, led an hermit's life there, and supported himself by teaching scholars. He returned to Kent, and resumed his studies under Adrian, till his feverish state of health compelled him to relinquish them. He mentions some of these circumstances in a kind letter to his old preceptor.[17]

"I confess, my dearest, whom I embrace with the tenderness of pure affection, that when, about three years ago, I left your social intercourse and withdrew from Kent, my littleness still was inflamed with an ardent desire for your society. I should have thought of it again, as it is my wish to be with you, if the course of things and the change of time would have suffered me; and if divers obstacles had not prevented me. The same weakness of my corporeal infirmity boiling within my emaciating limbs, which formerly compelled me to return home, when, after the first elements, I had rejoined you again, still delays me."

In another letter he expresses his love of study, and mentions the objects to which his attention was directed. These were the Roman jurisprudence, the

[16] Alfred's Bede, v. c. 18.
[17] Alfred's Bede, v. c. 18. Malmsb. de Pont. Gale, iii. 338.

metres of Latin poetry, arithmetic, astronomy, and its superstitious child, astrology.[18]

He became abbot of Malmsbury, and his government was distinguished by the numerous and splendid donations of land with which the great men of his time endowed his monastery. In 705 he was made bishop of Sherborn, and in 709 he died.

It is amusing to read the miracles that were ascribed to him. A beam of wood was once lengthened by his prayers; the ruins of the church he built, though open to the skies, were never wet with rain during the worst weather; one of his garments, when at Rome, once raised itself high in the air, and was kept there a while, self-suspended; a child, nine days old, at his command, once spake to clear the calumniated pope from the imputation of being its father.[19] Such were the effusions of monastic fancy, which our ancestors were once enamoured to read, and eager to believe.

We will now pass on to his literary character.

He, while abbot, addressed a letter to Geraint, king of Cornwall, whom he styles "the most glorious lord governing the sceptre of the western kingdom," on the subject of the proper day of celebrating Easter, which yet exists[20]; but which has nothing in it to deserve further notice. He addressed a learned book to Alfred, the intelligent king of Northumbria, on the dignity of the number 7, on paternal charity, on the nature of insensible things which are used in metaphors, on the rules of prosody, on the metres of poetry.[21]

Aldhelm was highly estimated by Malmsbury, in the twelfth century, who places him above both Bede and Alcuin. Bede, his contemporary, described him

[18] Gale, iii. 338. Henry has given almost the whole of it in his history, vol. iv. p. 14.

[19] Gale, iii. 351.

[20] Mag. Bib. xvi. Pat. p. 65.

[21] Gale, iii. 339.

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as a man in every respect most learned; neat in his style, and wonderfully skilled in secular and ecclesiastical literature. Alfred translates Bede's "nitidus in sermone" into "on wordum hluttor and scinende," clear and shining in his words.[22] Malmsbury closes his panegyric on his style with asserting, that from its acumen you would think it to be Greek; from its splendor, Roman; and from its pomp, English.[23] After these lavish commendations, it will be necessary to consider of their applicability.

His letter to Eahfrid contains a most elaborate specimen of Latin alliteration. Fifteen words begin with the same letter in the first paragraph.

"Primitus (pantorum procerum pretorumque pio potissimum paternoque præsertim privilegio) panegyricum poemataque passim prosatori sub polo promulgantes stridula vocum symphonia ac melodiæ cantilenæque carmine modulaturi hymnizenus."

In the same letter we have afterwards, "torrenda tetræ tortionis in tartara trusit." The whole epistle exhibits a series of bombastic amplification.[24]

His treatise in praise of virginity is his principal prose work, and is praised by Malmsbury for its rhetorico lepore. It is unfortunate for human genius, that the taste and judgment of mankind vary in every age, and that so defective are our criterions of literary merit, that even in the same age there are nearly as many critical opinions as there are individuals who assume a right to judge. Some things, however, please more permanently and more universally than others; and some kinds of merit, like that of Aldhelm, are only adapted to flourish at a particular period.

This singular treatise contains a profusion of epithets, new created words, paraphrases, and repetitions

[22] Alfred's Bede, v. 18.
[23] Gale, iii. 342.
[24] Usher Syll. Hib. Ep. p. 37.

conveyed in long and intricate periods. He clouds his meaning by his gorgeous rhetoric[25]: never content with illustrating his sentiment by an adapted simile, he is perpetually abandoning his subject to pursue his imagery. He illustrates his illustrations till he has forgotten both their meaning and applicability. Hence his style is an endless tissue of figures, which he never leaves till he has converted every metaphor into a simile, and every simile into a wearisome episode. In an age of general ignorance, in which the art of criticism was unknown, his diction pleased and informed by his magnificent exuberance. His imagery was valued for its minuteness, because, although usually unnecessary to its subject, and to us disgusting, as a mere mob of rhetorical figures, yet, as these long details contained considerable information for an uncultivated mind, and sometimes presented pictures which, in a poem, might not have been uninteresting[26], it was read with curiosity and praised with enthusiasm.

That the style of Aldhelm's prose work is the injudicious adoption of the violent metaphors and figures of northern poetry so like the swollen style of modern Persia, the following instances, but a sample of several pages of the book, will show; we have not only,

"The golden necklace of the virtues; the white jewels of merit; the purple flowers of modesty; the transparent eyeballs of virginal bashfulness; the grapes of iniquity; the swan-like hoariness of age; the shrubbery of pride; the torrid cautery of the dogmas; the phlebotomy of the Divine Word; unbarring the folding doors of dumb taciturnity; the helmet of grammar; the tenacious knot

[25] Yet its editor, Henry Wharton, in 1693, praises its eximiam elegantiam. Aldhelm addresses it to several religious ladies, his friends; as Hildelitha, Justina, Cuthberga, Osburga, Aldgida, Hidburga, Burrigida, Eulalia, Scholastica, and Tecla. S. 1.

[26] It frequently digresses into such descriptions as this: — "The various-coloured glory of the peacock excels in the perfect rotundity of its circles. Beauty in its feathers at one time assumes a saffron tinge, at another glows with purple grace; it now shines in cerulean blue, and now radiates like the yellow gold."

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of memory; the importunate dragon of gluttony; the shining lamps of chastity burning with the oil of modesty; the plenteous plantations of the apple tree fecundating the mind with flourishing leaf; and the fetid sink of impurity lamentably overwhelming the ships of the soul."—

But we have also long paragraphs of confused figures:—

"O illustrious grace of virginity, which as a rose rises from twigs of briars, reddens with a purple flower, and never putrifies in the dire decay of mortality, although it is tied to the weary frailness of death, and grows old with down-bending and crooked age."

"The leaky bark of our feeble ingenuity, shaken by the whirlwind of a dire tempest, may attain late its port of silence by laborious rowing of the arms; yet we trust that the sails of our yards, swelling with the blasts of every wind, will, notwithstanding their broken cables, navigate happily between the Scyllas of solecism and the gulph of barbarism, dreading the rocky collisions of vain-glory and the incautious whirlpools of self-love."

"Resembling the industry of the most sagacious bees which, when the dewy dawn appears, and the beams of the most limpid sun arise, pour the thick armies of their dancing crowds from the temple over the open fields; now lying in the honey-bearing leaves of the marigolds, or in the purple flowers of the mallows, they suck the nectar, drop by drop, with their beaks; now flying round the yellowing willows and purplish tops of the broom, they carry their plunder on numerous thighs and burthened legs, from which they make their waxen castles; now crowding about the round berries of the ivy, and the light springs of the flourishing linden tree, they construct the multiform machine of their honeycombs with angular and open cells, whose artificial structure the excellent poet with natural eloquence has sung in catalectic verse; so, unless I mistake, your memorising ingenuity of mind, in like manner wandering through the flourishing fields of letters, runs with a bibulous curiosity."[27]

Every page exhibits some strong effusions of fancy and high poetical feeling, but overloading their subjects; frequently inapplicable; never placed with taste nor limited by judgment, nor singly and distinctly used. The whole is a confused medley of great and

[27] Dr. Parr has condescended, in our own days, to mention "the battering ram of political controversies;" but Aldhelm preceded him with the figure: "the bulwark of the Catholic faith, shaken by the balistæ of secular argument, and overthrown by the battering rams of atrocious ingenuity." S. 36.

exuberant genius, wasting and burlesqueing uncommon powers.[28]

The celebrated BEDE, surnamed the Venerable[29], was a priest in the monastery at Weremouth, in the kingdom of Northumbria. His simple life will be best told in his own unaffected narration. He was born in 673.

"Born in the territory of the same monastery, when I was seven years of age, I was, by the care of my relation, committed to the reverend abbot Benedict to be educated, and then to Ceolfrid. I passed all the time of my life in the residence of this monastery, and gave all my labours to the meditation of the Scriptures, and to the observance of regular discipline, and the daily care of singing in the church. It was always sweet to me to learn to teach and to write.

"In my 19th year I was made deacon; in my 30th, a priest; both by the ministry of the most reverend bishop John, by the direction of the abbot Ceolfrid.

"From the time of my receiving the order of priesthood, to the 59th year of my life, I have employed myself in briefly noting from the works of the venerable fathers these things on the Holy Scriptures, for the necessities of me and mine, and in adding something to the form of their sense and interpretation."

The works which he then enumerates, are,

"Commentaries on most of the books of the Old and New Testament, and the Apocrypha.

Two books of Homilies.

A book of letters to different persons; one on the Six Ages — on the Tabernacles of the Children of Israel— on a passage in Isaiah — on the Bissextile — on the Equinox according to Anatolius.

[28] His encomiastical periphrasis on the Virgin, though placed as prose, seems meant to rime. It is in the same rhetorical style. He says, that she,

Beata Maria
Virgo perpetua;
Hortus conclusus,
Fons signatus:
Virgula radicis:
Gerula floris:
Aurora solis:
Nurus patris.
Genetrix et Germana
Filii simul que sponsa;
Sanctarum socrus animarum,
Supernorum regina civium —
— Obsidem seculi,
Monarcham mundi,
Rectorem poli;
Redemptorem soli;
Archangelo promentrante,
Paracleto adumbrante;

S. 40.

deserved to be expatiated upon.

[29] They who desire to know when the name Venerable was applied to Bede, may consult the Appendix to Smith's Bede, p. 106.

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The Life and Passion of St. Felix the Confessor, translated into prose from the metrical work of Paulinus.
The Life and Passion of St. Anastasius, corrected from a bad translation of the Greek.
The Life of St. Cuthbert in verse and prose.
The History of the Abbots, Benedict, Ceolfrid, and Huaetberct.
The Ecclesiastical History of England.
A Martyrology.
A book of Hymns in various metre or rythm.
A book of Epigrams in heroic or elegiac metre.
Book on the Nature of Things and Times.
Another book on Times.
A book on Orthography.
A book on the Metrical Art.
And a book on the Tropes and Figures used in Scripture."[30]

Besides these works, Bede wrote others, on Grammar, Arithmetic, Music, Astronomy, and Astrology.

His theological works occupy nearly six folio volumes out of eight. He has commented on every book of the Scriptures, from Genesis to the Revelations; and he introduces on each as much learning and knowlege as any one individual could then, by the most patient research, accumulate.

His treatise on the Trinity is a commentary on the tract of Boethius on that subject. His homilies and sermons occupy the seventh volume. His meditations on the last words of our Saviour display great devotional sensibility.

All his remarks show a calm and clear good sense, a straight-forward mind, occasionally misled to imitate or adopt many of the allegorical interpretations of the Greek fathers, but usually judging soundly. They evince a most extensive reading, and presented his age with the best selections from the best authors on the passages which he expounds.

His moral taste and wisdom appear in his excellent selection of moral sentences from the works of the ancients. He has collected all that was known of the

[30] Smith's Bede, p. 222.

theory and practice of chronology, of natural philosophy, of the popular part of astronomy, and of the theory and practice of music; the laws of Latin prosody; the chief topics of grammar, rhetoric, and arithmetic[31]; and the main facts and dates of general history.[32] His calculations for the calendar are very elaborate; his treatise on blood-letting displays some of the universal superstitions of his countrymen, as to proper days and times[33]; and in another work, he tells us that trees ought to be cut in the third week of the moon, or they will be corroded by worms[34]; but it is St. Ambrose, not himself, who is responsible for this fancy. He states of tides, that they followed the moon; and that as the moon rises and sets every day four fourths or four fifths of an hour later than the preceding, so do the tides ebb and flow with a similar retardation.[35]

The style of Bede in all his works is plain and unaffected. Attentive only to his matter, he had little solicitude for the phrase in which he dressed it. But though seldom eloquent, and often homely, it is clear, precise, and useful. His treatise on the Six Ages gives a regular series of Jewish chronology, and then of general chronology, carried down to the year 729. His History of England is the only contemporary document we have of the transactions of the Anglo-Saxon octarchy, and it furnishes us with many particulars not to be found elsewhere. His Lives of Religious Persons are disfigured with those legends which degrade his history; but as they were the object of general admiration and belief in his day, his credulity was the credulity of his age. His works

[31] In his Tract on Arithmetic, p. 104., he gives the Mensa Pythagorica, which is, in fact, the multiplication table, invested with so proud a title. His notation is the Roman. He says, that what the Latins called numerus, and the Hebrews monna, the Macedonians named calculus, from the little stones which they held in their hands when they reckoned, p. 113. Hence our calculation.

[32] Bede also teaches the indigitatio, or the manner of telling and computing with the fingers, p. 167.

[33] Op. vol. i. p. 472. [34] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 115. [35] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 116.

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poured an useful flood of matter for the exercise and improvement of the Anglo-Saxon mind, and collected into one focus all that was known to the ancient world, excepting the Greek mathematicians, and some of their literature and philosophy which he had not much studied. To have written them in such a period of ignorance, with means so imperfect, displays an ardent intellect, unwearied in its exertions; and by their popularity among the clergy, contributed to diffuse a taste for literature, which other causes in due time matured. His life was of great importance to his age, in his scholars; for he educated four men, who greatly promoted literature in France in the following age: Alcuin, Claudius, Rabanus, and Erigena.

He died in the year 735, and his death is thus described by his pupil Cuthbert:—

His death.

"He was attacked with a severe infirmity of frequent short breathing, yet without pain, about two weeks before Easter day; and so he continued, joyful and glad, and giving thanks to Almighty God day and night, indeed hourly, till the day of Ascension. He gave lessons to us his disciples every day, and he employed what remained of the day in singing of psalms. The nights he passed without sleep, yet rejoicing and giving thanks, unless when a little slumber intervened. When he waked, he resumed his accustomed devotions, and with expanded hands never ceased returning thanks to God. Indeed I never saw with my eyes, nor heard with my ears, any one so diligent in his grateful devotions. O truly blessed man! He sang the passage in St. Paul, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;' and many other things from the Scripture, in which he admonished us to arouse ourselves from the sleep of the mind. He also recited something in our English language; for he was very learned in our songs; and, putting his thoughts into English verse, he spoke it with compunction. 'For this necessary journey no one can be more prudent than he ought to be, to think before his going hence what of good or evil his spirit after death will be judged worthy of.' He sang the Antiphonæ according to our custom and his own, of which one is 'O King of Glory, Lord of virtues, leave us not orphans, but send the promise of the Father, the Spirit of Truth, upon us. Alleluia.' When he came to the words Spirit of Truth, he burst into tears, and wept much; and we with him. We read and wept again; indeed we always read in tears." After mention-

ing that he was occupied in translating St. John's Gospel into Saxon, his pupil adds: "When he came to the third festival before the Ascension Day, his breathing began to be very strongly affected, and a little swelling appeared in his feet. All that day he dictated cheerfully, and sometimes said, among other things, 'Make haste —I know not how long I shall last. My Maker may take me away very soon.' It seemed to us that he knew well he was near his end. He passed the night watching and giving thanks. When the morning dawned he commanded us to write diligently what we had begun. This being done, we walked till the third hour with the relics of the saints, as the custom of the day required. One of us was with him, who said, 'There is yet, beloved master, one chapter wanting; will it not be unpleasant to you to be asked any more questions?' He answered, 'Not at all; take your pen, prepare it, and write with speed.' He did so. At the ninth hour he said to me, 'I have some valuables in my little chest. But run quickly and bring the presbyters of our monastery to me, that I may distribute my small presents.'—He addressed each, and exhorted them to attend to their masses and prayers. They wept when he told them they would see him no more; but he said it was time that he should return to the Being who had formed him out of nothing. He conversed in this manner cheerfully till the evening, when the boy said, 'Dear master, one sentence is still wanting.' 'Write it quick,' exclaimed Bede. When it was finished, he said, 'Take my head in your hands, for I shall delight to sit opposite the holy place where I have been accustomed to pray, and where I can invoke my Father.' When he was placed on the pavement, he repeated the Gloria Patri, and expired in the effort."[36]

Bede was very highly respected in his day. Boniface, whose life we shall next detail, asks for his works, and speaks of him as a man enriched by the divine grace with a spiritual intellect, and as irradiating his country. Pope Sergius wished his presence in Rome, for the benefit of his counsel.

Boniface. Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon missionary, whose Latin poems have been before alluded to, and who, in the eighth century, founded the principal bishoprics, and the abbey of Fulda, and several monasteries in Germany, was born in Devonshire. His name was Winfrith.[37] He calls himself German Legate of the Apostolic See[38], and mentions that, "born and nourished in the nation of the English, we wander

[36] Smith's Bede, 793.
[37] Bon. Ep. Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 71.
[38] Ibid. 51.

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here by the precept of the Apostolic Seat."[39] From another letter, we find that he had visited Rome, to give an account of his mission, and that the pope had exhorted him to return and persevere in his efforts.[40] He was in the archiepiscopal dignity from 745 to 754. His activity was exerted with the greatest success between the Weser and the Rhine. He anointed Pepin king of the Francs in 752. During his absence abroad he kept up an extensive correspondence in England. We have several of his letters to the kings of the Anglo-Saxon octarchy. He wrote to Ethelbald, king of Mercia, begging his assistance to the friend who carried his letter, and sending him some presents. To the same king he addressed a longer letter of moral rebuke and religious exhortation. Ethelbert, the king of Kent, sent to him a complimentary letter, mentioning his rumoured successes in the conversion of the Germans, and presenting him with a bowl of silver gilt. Sigebald, a king of the octarchy, wrote to him to request that he would be one of his bishops; and Æbuald, king of East Anglia, also addressed him in a very kind and respectful manner.[41]

His letters to Nothelm, archbishop of Canterbury, to the Anglo-Saxon bishops, Daniel and Ecberth, and to several abbots and abbesses, are yet preserved. His correspondence with the son of Charles Martel, with Pepin, King of France, and with the Popes Gregory II. and III., and Zachary, also exists. He appears to have been a man of considerable attainments, of earnest piety, and the most active benevolence. His last Christian labours were in East Friesland, where he was killed with fifty companions.[42]

[39] Bon. Ep. Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 52. [40] Ibid. 60.

[41] See these letters, Mag. Bib. Pat. xvi.

[42] Three of the books that he had then with him are still preserved in the monastery of Fulda. The Gospels in his own hand-writing; an harmony of the New Testament; and a volume stained with his blood, containing a letter of Pope Leo, St. Ambrose, on the Holy Ghost, with his treatise De Bono Mortis, "On the Advantage of Death." Alb. Butler's Lives, vol. vi. p. 88.

Eddius, surnamed Stephanus, is described by Bede[43], as the first singing master in the churches of Northumbria, and as having been invited from Kent by Wilfrid. He flourished about 720, and wrote the life of Bishop Wilfrid: he addresses his work to bishop Acca and the abbot Tatbert. Eddius begins it with a ridiculous prodigy. While the mother of Wilfrid was in labour with him, the house where she lay seemed to those without to be in flames. The neighbours hastened with water to extinguish them. But the fire was not real: it was only a type of Wilfrid's future sanctity and honour. The miracles of his mature age were of course not less extraordinary. To restore a dead child to life, and to heal another with his arms and thighs broken by a fall from a scaffold; a dark dungeon supernaturally illuminated; St. Michael coming from heaven to cure him of a malady; a withered hand restored by touching the cloth in which his corpse had been laid; an angel appearing with a golden cross to hinder his chamber from being burnt; are some of the effusions of Eddius's fancy, with which he feebly attempts to adorn his composition and its object.[44] Eddius.

The style is not so plain as Bede, nor so affected as Aldhelm; but is seldom above mediocrity.

Among the pupils formed by Bede, Alcuin (or Albinus), the literary friend and preceptor of Charlemagne, is entitled to the most honourable notice of all the Saxon literati of the eighth century. He was born in Northumbria, and studied at York under Egbert. He says of himself, that he was nourished and educated at York[45], and that he went in his youth to Rome, and heard Peter of Pisa dispute on Christianity with a Jew. Alcuin.

He was sent on an embassy from Offa to Charle-

[43] Bede, lib. iv. c. 2.
[44] See his Life of Wilfrid, in Gale Scrip. iii. p. 40.
[45] Malmsb. de Gest. Reg. p. 24.

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magne, and after this period the emperor was so highly attached to him, that in 790 he went to France, and settled there. Here he composed many works on the sciences and arts, which were valued in that day for the use and instruction of Charlemagne. These still exist, and a number of letters and poems also appear in his works, addressed to Charlemagne, on a variety of topics, under the name of David, and written in the most affectionate language. He was indefatigable in exciting the emperor to the love and encouragement of learning, and in the collection of MSS. for its dissemination. His efforts spread it through France, and his reputation contributed much to establish it in Europe. After the enjoyment of imperial affection and confidence to a degree which literature has never experienced in any other instance, he retired to the abbey of Saint Martin, at Tours, where he died in 804.[46]

He attained great affluence from the favour of his imperial friend. He remarks that a Spanish ecclesiastic, whose erring opinions he had censured, blamed him for the multitude of his riches, and for the number of his servi, or bondsmen, being 20,000. Alcuin does not contradict the fact, but denies that it had corrupted his mind: "It is one thing to possess the world; it is another to be possessed by it."[47]

He seems to have been much afflicted with illness, for he often mentions his headachs, the daily pains of his weak body, and a species of continual fever.[48]

The merit of Alcuin's poetry we have already exhibited. His prose is entitled to the praise of learning, eloquence, and more judgment than any of his

[46] See his works, published by Du Chesne, at Paris, in 1617.

[47] Alb. Op. p. 927.

[48] Op. p. 1505—1511.; and "the wicked fever scarcely, scarcely suffers me to live on earth. It seeks to open for me the road to heaven. Health leads me to seek its precious treasures amid the fields and hills, and verdant meadows." P. 1509.

contemporaries exhibited. He had a correct and high feeling of morals and piety; his taste was of an improved kind, and his mind was clear and acute. But it must be recollected of him, as of all the writers of the Anglo-Saxon period, that their greatest merit consisted in acquiring, preserving, and teaching the knowlege which other countries and times had accumulated. They added little to the stock themselves. They left it as they found it. But they separated its best parts from the words and lumber with which these were connected, and thus prepared the ground for further improvement; and their efforts, examples, and tuition, contributed to excite the taste, and to diffuse the acquisition. Unless such men had existed, the knowlege, which the talents of mankind had been for ages slowly acquiring, would have gradually mouldered away with the few perishing MSS. which contained it. Europe would have become what Turkey is, and mankind would have been now slowly emerging into the infancy of literature and science, instead of rejoicing in that noble manhood which we have attained. Several Irish ecclesiastics at this time attained eminence, and assisted to instruct both France and Italy. Of these Claudius, also a disciple of Bede, and friend of Albinus, Dungal, and Duncan, were the most conspicuous. All these were patronised by Charlemagne.

Erigena.

Another disciple of Bede, and one of the literary companions of Alfred, Johannes Erigena, or John the Irishman, was distinguished by the acumen of his intellect and the expanse of his knowlege. Though a native of the west of Europe, he was well skilled in Grecian literature[49], for he translated from the Greek

[49] Boquet, in his recueil of the ancient French chronicles, says, that after Charlemagne had obtained the empire of the West, and an epistolary intercourse had taken place between the Franks and Greeks, "Cœpit occidentalibus nosci et in usu esse lingua Græca." T. viii. p. 107.

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language a work of Dionysius, called the Areopagite[50], and the Scholia of Maximus, on Gregory the theologian.[51] He dedicated this last work to Charles, the French king, at whose command he had undertaken both.[52] At the request of Hincmar, the archbishop, and another, he wrote on Predestination against Gotheschalcus[53]; he composed also a book De Visione Dei[54]; and another, De Corpore et Sanguine Domini.[55] This last was written at the request of Charles the Bald, who was a great patron of letters.[56] This book was peculiarly unfortunate. It was assailed by several ecclesiastics, and adjudged to the flames.[57]

His principal work was, his Treatise De Divisione Naturæ, a dialogue which is distinguished for its Aristotelian acuteness, and extensive information. In his discussions on the nature of the Deity, and in considering how far his usual attributes describe

[50] That the works ascribed to Dionysius, the Areopagite, are suppositious, and were written after the fourth century, see Dupin, vol. i. p. 100—111. ed. Paris, 1688. They suited the genius of Erigena, for their "principal but est de parler des mystères d'une manière curieuse et recherchée, de les expliquer suivant les principes de la philosophie de Platon et en des termes platoniciens." p. 104.

[51] This was Gregory Nazianzen. Maximus, opposing some theological opinions which the imperial court approved, perished 662. Dupin, t. vi. John's translation was published by Dr. Gale, at the end of his treatise De Divisione Naturæ, ed. Ox. 1681.

[52] So he declares in his dedication. He tells the king, "Difficillimum prorsus (orthodoxissime regum) servulo vestro imbecilli valde etiam in Latinis quanto magis in Græcis, laborem injunxistis." He states, that what he found in Dionysius obscure and incomprehensible, Maximus had very lucidly explained. He particularizes instances which are certainly among the most recondite, and happily most useless topics of theological logic.

[53] Fab. Bib. Med. l. ix. c. 401. This brought upon John, besides Prudentius Tricassimus, Florus of Lyons, who attacked him in the name of the Church at Lyons. Fab. l. iv. c. 194.; and Cave, Hist. Lit. 447.

[54] Mabillon found this in MS. It begins, "Omnes sensus corporei ex conjunctione nascuntur animæ et corporis." Fab. Med. l. ix. p. 401.

[55] Fab. p. 404.

[56] Heric, the bishop of Austin, says, in his letter to Charles in 876, "Quidquid igitur literæ possunt, quidquid assequuntur ingenia vobis debent." Bouquet, vii. p. 563. The editor quotes a monk of Saint Denys, in the same age, who says, "Karolus—disciplinas adeo excoluit ut earum ipse quarundam munere sagacissime fungeretur," ibid. A passage of Heric's letter deserves quotation, because what he hints of the emigration of Irish literature may account for Erigena's being in France: "Quid Hiberniam memorem, contempto pelagi discrimine, pene totam cum grege philosophorum ad littora nostra migrantem — quorum quisque peritior est, ultro sibi indicit exilium ut Solomoni sapientissimo famuletur ad votum." Bouq. vii. p. 563.

[57] In 1050 and in 1059, an old Chronicler speaks apparently of this book, when he says of Berengarius, "Joannem Scotum igni comburens, cujus lectione ad hanc nefariam devolutus fuerat sectam." Fab. p. 404.

his nature, or but metaphorically allude to it, he manifests great subtlety.[58] On the applicability of the categories of Aristotle, to the same Being, he is also very acute and metaphysical; and he concludes that none of the categories are, in this case, applicable, except, perhaps, that of relation, and even this but figuratively.[59] In his consideration, whether the category place be a substance or an accident, he takes occasion to give concise and able definitions of the seven liberal arts, and to express his opinion on the composition of things.[60] In another part, he inserts a very elaborate discussion on arithmetic, which, he says, he had learnt from his infancy.[61] He also details a curious conversation on the elements of things, on the motions of the heavenly bodies, and other topics of astronomy and physiology. Among these, he even gives the means of calculating the diameters of the lunar and solar circles.[62] Besides the fathers, Austin, the two Gregorys, Chrysostom, Basil, Epiphanius, Origen, Jerome, and Ambrosius, of whose works, with the Platonising Dionysius, and Maximus, he gives large extracts; he also quotes Virgil, Cicero, Aristotle, Pliny, Plato, and Boetius: he details the opinions of Eratosthenes[63], and of Pythagoras on some astronomical topics[64]; he also cites Martianus Capella.[65] His knowlege of Greek appears almost in every page.

The *De Divisione Naturæ* certainly indicates great curiosity and research of mind, though it rather exercises ingenuity than conveys information. In a future age, when such disquisitions were offensive to that anti-christian despotism which was spreading its clouds over the European hemisphere, a pope, Honorius III., issued a bull to declare, that it "abounded with the worms of heretical depravity." He com-

[58] De Divisione Naturæ, p. 6—11.
[59] Ibid. p. 13.
[60] Ibid. p. 18, 19.
[61] Ibid. p. 111.
[62] Ibid. p. 144—149.
[63] Ibid. p. 146, 147. 149.
[64] Ibid. p. 145—149.
[65] Ibid. p. 147, 148. This ancient author, whose era is not ascertained (though he must have preceded Gregory of Tours, who mentions him), left nine books, two De Nuptiis Philologiæ, the other seven on the seven liberal arts. His work was twice printed with innumerable mistakes. Grotius, in his fourteenth year, astonished the world, by correcting justly almost all the errors. The recollection of this induced Vossius to say, "Quo Batavo — nihil nunc undique eruditius, vel sol videt, vel solum sustinet." Hist. Lat. 713. How highly Capella was once esteemed, may be inferred from the panegyric of Gregory of Tours, lib. x. c. 31. p. 243. Barthius, one of those great scholars whose race is now extinct, says of him, "Jam ante ipsos mille annos tanta Capellæ hujus auctoritas, ut qui eum teneret, videretur omnium artium arcana nosse." Adversaria, c. 23. p. 409. Barthius describes his work thus: "Tota fere ibi Cyclopædia novem chartis absoluta est, cum innumeris interioris sapientiæ mysteriis versu atque prosa oratione indicatis et propositis," ib. p. 960. For what is known of Capella, see Fab. Bib. Lat. iii. p. 213—224.

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plains, that it was received into monasteries, and that "scholastic men, more fond of novelty than was expedient, occupied themselves studiously in reading it." He therefore commands, that they "solicitously seek for it every where; and, if they safely could, that they send it to him to be burnt, or to burn it themselves." He excommunicates all such as should keep a copy fifteen days after notice of this order.[66] As all inquiries of the human mind must be accompanied by many errors, it is a lamentable abuse of power to pursue the speculative to death or infamy for efforts of thinking, which, if wrong, the next critic or literary opponent is best fitted to detect and overthrow. No error, if left to itself, will be a perennial plant. No power can prevent, though it may retard, the growth of truth.

Erigena was in great favour with Charles. The king, one day as they were feasting opposite to each other, took occasion to give him a gentle rebuke for some irregularity, by asking him, "what separates a Scot from a sot?" The philosopher, with ready wit, retorted, "the table."[67] The king had the good sense and friendship to smile at the turn.

At another time, when he was at table, the servants brought in a dish containing two large fishes, and a very small one. John was a thin little man, and was sitting near two ecclesiastics of vast size. The king bade him divide the fish with them. John, whose cheerful mind was always alive to pleasantry, conveyed the two large fishes into his own plate, and divided the little one between the ecclesiastics. The king accused him of an unfair partition. "Not so," says John. "Here are two large fishes," pointing to

[66] See this bull at length in Fab. Bib. Med. lib. ix. 402. It is dated 10 Kal. Feb. 1225.

[67] Matt. West. 333. Malmsb. 3 Gale 360. The Latin words which John so readily converted into a pun that retorted the king's sarcasm upon himself, are "Quid distat inter sottum et Scottum?"

his plate, "with a small one," alluding to himself. "There are also two large ones," looking at the divines, "and a little one," pointing to their plates.[68]

After Charles's death, he was invited to England by Alfred, whose munificence rewarded his talents; he placed him at Malmsbury[69], and also at Ethelingey.

The life of John ended unfortunately; he was stabbed by the boys he taught.[70] That he died violently, will not be questioned; but a controversy accompanies the catastrophe.[71]

The proficiency and examples of Bede and Alcuin, and their pupils and friends, seemed to promise an age of literary cultivation; and the prosperity of Egbert's reign, which immediately followed, was favourable to the realisation of this hope. But the

[68] Malmsb. Gale, iii. 361. That John was an inmate in Charles's palace, we also learn from his contemporary, Pardulus, who says, "Scotum illum qui est in palatio regis Johannem nomine." Testim. prefixed.

[69] Venitque ad regem Elfredum cujus munificentia illectus et magisterio ejus, ut ex scriptis regis intellexi, sublimis Melduni resedit. Malmsb. 361.

[70] So Malmsb. 361. The same words are in Matt. West. 334.; and Hoveden, 419.; and Fordun, 670.

[71] The question is, whether Erigena, whom William kills at Malmsbury, is the same of whom Asser says, that he was placed by Alfred over his new monastery at Ethelingey, and that some malicious monks hired two lads to kill him at midnight, when he came to pray alone at the altar, p. 61. My own opinion is, that they are not two persons; 1st. Asser, in page 47., talks of a John, who, by the traits he gives, was Erigena. He there styles him merely "Johannem presbyterum et monachum," and he has the same phrases of the John killed at Ethelingey, in p. 61. 2d. Ingulf expressly places Erigena at Ethelingey, p. 27. 3d. Asser says, the John of Ethelingey was stabbed by two French lads, "duos servulos," 62; and it is rather improbable that another John should at the same time be killed in the same place by lads. 4th. The ancient epitaph quoted by Malmsbury says he was *martyred*, which is an expression very suitable to Asser's account of his being stabbed at the altar when praying, and of the assassins intending to drag his body to a prostitute's door. 5th. Asser's account agrees with Malmsbury's, as to his assassins being lads, *whom he taught*; for Asser says, that Alfred placed in that monastery French children to be taught. 6th. The mode of the assassination is the same in both. Malmsbury says, 361., "Animam exuit tormento gravi et acerbo ut dum iniquitas valida et manus infirma sæpe frustaretur et sæpe impeteret, amarem mortem obiret." I understand this to imply many wounds, and not immediate death. Asser says, "Et crudelibus afficiunt vulneribus," p. 63., and that the monks found him not dead, and brought him home so, "semivivum colligentes cum gemitu et merore domum reportaverunt, p. 64. I think it is improbable that two persons of the same name and station should at the same time have experienced the same singular catastrophe. I would rather suppose that Erigena had been abbot of both places, and therefore the memory of the crime was preserved at both. Asser had the property of two monasteries given to him by Alfred, p. 50.

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fierce invasions of the Northmen now began. Their desolating bands spread fire and sword over the most cultivated parts of the country. Monasteries and their libraries were burnt. The studious were dispersed or destroyed. The nation was plundered and impoverished; and warfare, avenging or defensive, became the habit of the better conditioned. One man, our Alfred, made the efforts already noticed to revive literature in the island, in the midst of these destructive storms; but even he could not obtain a sufficient interval of peace for its diffusion. The attack of Hastings in the latter part of his life, when he could have done most for letters, again renewed through his kingdom the necessity of great martial exertions; and his earls, thanes, and knights, as well as their dependents, were, for their own preservation, compelled to make warlike education and exercises the great business of life. The occupation of one third of England by the Northmen colonisers of Northumbria and East Anglia; their hostile movements, and the attempts of similar adventurers, kept the country in the same state of martial efficiency and employment, which precluded that enjoyment of peaceful leisure in which letters flourish, and they accordingly declined. The monastic friends of Edgar endeavoured to revive them; but scarcely had Edgar acquired and transmitted a full and prosperous sovereignty, in which the Anglo-Danes and Anglo-Saxons had become melted into one nation; and Dunstan, and his friends Ethelwald and Oswald, were exerting themselves to revive literature, and to multiply its best asylums, the monastic establishments, when, under his second son, the calamities of desolating invasions of Danes and Norwegians again overspread the country, and ended in the establishment of a Danish dynasty on the throne of Alfred. This event spread a race of Danish lords over the English

soil, and the mutual jealousy and bickerings between them and the old Saxon proprietary body kept all the country in an armed state, which made warlike accomplishment and exercises still the first necessity and occupation of all. The reign of Edward the Confessor began a new era of peace and harmony, and literature would have again raised her head among the Anglo-Saxons; but, in the next succession, their dynasty was destroyed. Thus, though important political benefits resulted from the invading fanaticism of the North, yet their continued attacks, and the consequences that attended them, intercepted and diverted, for above a century and a half, the intellectual cultivation of the Anglo-Saxon nation.

Hence the historian has no progressive development to display in the farther contemplation of the Anglo-Saxon mind. The sufferings of the nation carried the thinking students of the day strongly towards religious literature: and little else than sermons and homilies[72], penitentiaries and confessions[73], lives of saints[74], and translations and expositions of the Scriptures[75], with some authentic but plain and meagre chronicles[76], formularies of superstitions[77], and medicinal tracts[78], were produced in the century preceding the Norman conquest. The only individuals who are entitled to be selected from

[72] The Anglo-Saxon MSS. of these are enumerated by Wanley in his Catalogue, pp. 1—48. 52—63. 69. 72. 81. 86—88. 90. 92. 97. 111. 116. 122. 131—144. 154. —176. 186—211, &c. &c. &c. Their number exceeds by far all the other topics.

[73] As p. 50. 112. 145. and the Rule of Benedict, 91. 122.

[74] Wanley's MSS. p. 79. Martyrologies, &c. 106. 185.

[75] As MSS. of the Gospels, p. 64. 76. 211.; the Heptateuch, 67.; Psalter, 76. 152.; Paraphrases of the Lord's Prayer, Creed, Gloria Patri, p. 48. 51. 81. 147, 148.; Prayers, 64. 147, 202.; Jubilate, 76. 168. 182, 183.; Hymns, 98, 99. 243.; Judith, 98.; and the Pseudo-Gospel of Nicodemus, 96.

[76] As the MS. Chronicles mentioned, p. 64. 84. 95. 130, &c.

[77] Their expositions of dreams, prognostications, charms, exorcisms, and predictions on the moon, thunder, birth, health, &c. abound. See p. 40. 44. 88, 89, 90. 98. 110. 114. 194. &c.

[78] As the MS. in p. 72—75. and 176—180. See also Apuleius de Herbis, p. 92. This latter is very valuable from the English or Saxon names of the plants which are given to the Latin ones of the original.

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the general inferiority and uniformity are the two Elfrics; Elfric Bata, and his scholar Elfric, the abbot and bishop, of whom the latter only deserves notice here; for whose works, chiefly grammars, translations from the Scriptures, homilies, and lives of saints, we refer the reader to Wanley's Catalogue of the Anglo-Saxon MSS. But his exhortations to his fellow-clergymen, to study and to diligence in their duties, ought to be remembered to his honour To the archbishop Wulstan he writes:—

"It becomes us bishops that we should unclose that book-learning which our canons teach, and also the book of Christ to you, priests! in English speech, because all of you do not understand Latin." [79]

To bishop Wulfsin he wrote:—

"You ought often to address your clergy, and reprove their negligence, because, by their perversity the statutes of the canons and the religious knowlege of the holy church is almost destroyed." [80]

His translations from the Heptateuch into Anglo-Saxon he addressed to the ealdorman Ethelwerd. [81] His letter, with other religious treatises, to Wulfget, and another to Sigwerd, show that the Anglo-Saxon language had acquired the name of ENGLISH in his time:—

"I, Elfric, abbot, by this *English* writing, friendly greet Wulfget, at Ylmandune, in this, that we now here speak of those English writings which I lend thee. The meaning of those writings pleased thee well, and I said that I would yet send thee more." [82] —

"Ælfric, abbot, greets friendlily Sigwerd at East Heolon. I say to thee truly that he is very wise who speaketh in works; and I turned these into *English*, and advise you, if you will, to read them yourself." [83] —

"I, Elfric, would turn this little book (his grammar) to the *English* phrase from that ꝥæꝑ-cꝑæꝑꝥe (art of letters) which is called grammatica, because ꝥæꝑ-cꝑæꝑꝥe is the key that unlocks the meaning of books." [84]

[79] Elfric MSS. Wanley, p. 22.
[80] Ibid. p. 58.
[81] This was printed by Thwaite.
[82] Elfric MSS. Wanley, p. 69.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid. p. 84.

His anxiety for the good and correct writing of his books is thus expressed:—

"Look! you who write this book: write it by this example; and for God's love make it that it be less to the writer's credit for beauty than for reproach to me.[85]

"I pray now, if any one will write this book, that he make it well from this example, because I would not yet bring into it any error through false writers. It will be, then, his fault, not mine. The un-writer doth much evil, if he will not rectify his mistake."[86]

Anglo-Saxon Romance of Apollonius.

Among the Anglo-Saxon MSS. that remain may be remarked the History or rather Romance of Apollonius, king of Tyre.[87] It is a prose composition in our ancient language, but the present author has not yet had an opportunity of consulting it.[88]

[85] Elfric MSS. Wanley, p. 69.

[86] Ibid. p. 85. He begins his letter prefixed to his translation of Genesis, thus:—"Elfric, monk, humbly greets Æthelwærd, ealdorman. You bade me, dear, that I should turn from Latin into English the book Genesis. I thought it would be a heavy thing to grant this, and you said that I need not translate more of the book than to Isaac, the son of Abraham, because some other man had translated this book from Isaac to the end," &c. Of his translations from the first seven books of the Old Testament, he says, "Moses wrote five books by wonderful appointment. We have turned them truly into English. The book that Joshua made I turned also into English some time since, for Ethelwerd, ealdorman. The book of Judges men may read in the English writing, into which I translated it." He adds of Job, "I turned formerly some sayings from this into English." Elfric de Vet. Testam. MS., and cited by Thwaites.

[87] It is among the MSS. at Cambridge. It is mentioned by Wanley, p. 147., and is there said to have been first written in Greek, and then turned into Latin during the time of the emperors. A Greek MS. of it is said to be at Vienna, with a version in modern Greek. Since the Fifth Edition of this History, Mr. B. Thorpe has published, from the Cambridge MS., this work, with an English translation. He entitles it "The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Story of Apollonius of Tyre, upon which is founded the Play of Pericles, attributed to Shakspeare." Lond., 1834. He mentions in his preface, "The Latin Version, of which the Saxon is a Translation, forms the 153rd Chapter of Gesta Romanorum; but a more ancient and better Text is that given by Welser, from a Manuscript in the Library of the Abbey of St. Ulric and St. Afra, at Augsberg. M. Velseri Op. Hist. et Philol. Novemb. 1682."

Mr. Thorpe, besides a Translation of Cedmon, has also published a valuable selection, in prose and verse, from Anglo-Saxon authors of various ages, in his Analecta Anglo-Saxonica, with a Glossary. Lond., 1834.

[88] While we admit that our Anglo-Saxon ancestors neither generally cultivated literature nor attained much eminence in it, we must, in justice to them, at the same time intimate, that neither France nor Italy, during their dynasties, appear to have excelled them. When Pope Gregory II., who died 731, appointed his legates to attend a council, he wrote this excuse for their palpable ignorance: "We send them for the obedience we owe, and not for our confidence in their knowlege: for how can the knowlege of the Scriptures be fully found among men who are placed in the middle of Gentiles, and who seek their daily bread by their bodily labour." Muratori, Ans. Ital. 810. An epistle of Pope Hadrian I., who

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died 795, betrays such an ignorance of grammar, as to use prepositions without changing the cases of nouns they were to govern; as, una cum indiculum; una cum omnes benebentani. The pontiff also put for Latin such strange words as these, "eorumque novilissimis sui voles." Mur. ib. 811. Hence, though Muratori fairly says, "I do not mean to state that Italy was turned into Lapland when the Lombards conquered it, or that letters were so destroyed that no one could read or write," yet he admits that "if any of the clergy spoke to the people, you had nothing but what was trite and vulgar, or puerile and silly." p. 810.

France was not then in a better state. It is mentioned by the Monach. Engolism., that "before Charlemagne there was in Gaul *no* study of the liberal arts," though some few of the superior clergy endeavoured to excite the taste. Thus a bishop in 796, in his donation of a church to a priest, directed part of the benefit to be applied "in schola habenda et pueris educandis." Murat. 811. The patronage of Charlemagne to letters had great effects, but not universal ones; for in 823 Lotharius I., in his capitulary on learning, states, that "from the neglect and sloth of the governors, it was in all places entirely extinguished (funditus extincta)." To remedy this, he desires that every exertion should be used to give scholars the instruction they needed. And he established schools in eight cities of his kingdom for the reception of those who would resort to them. "That all may have the opportunity, we have provided fit places for this exercitium, in order that poverty may be an excuse to no more from the difficulties of distant stations." Such truly royal benefactions could only do good; yet not very long afterwards, Lupus, the abbot of Ferrara, declares that the study of literature was still almost obsolete in France. "Who," he exclaims, "does not deservedly complain of the inability of the masters, the penury of books, and the want of sufficient leisure?" ib. 829. So learning continued in as bad a state in Italy; for the council held at Rome in the year 826 declared that Italy abounds with *unlearned* presbyters, deacons, and subdeacons, whom therefore the sacred synod for a time has suspended from the divine offices, that learned persons may be made fit to come to the due discharge of their ministry." Ib.

The Anglo-Saxons were therefore not inferior to their neighbours. It will be nearer the truth to say, that from the year 700 to 900 the literary characters whom this work notices to have emerged in England may claim, on the whole, a superiority over the intellectual produce of the Continent during the same period.

## CHAP. VII.

### *The Sciences of the* ANGLO-SAXONS.

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THE most enlightened nations of antiquity had not made much progress in any of the sciences but the mathematical. During the Anglo-Saxon period, the general mind of Europe turned from their cultivation, to other pursuits more necessary and congenial to their new political situation. Happily for mankind, they were attended to during this period more efficiently in the Mahomedan kingdoms. The Arabian mind being completely settled in fertile countries and mild climates, enjoyed all the leisure that was wanted for the cultivation of natural knowlege; its acuteness and activity took this direction, and began preparing that intellectual feast which we are now lavishly enjoying, and perpetually enlarging.

The history of the sciences among the Anglo-Saxons can contain little more information than that some individuals successively arose, as Aldhelm, Bede, Alcuin, Johannes Scotus, and a few more, who endeavoured to learn what former ages had known, and who freely disseminated what they had acquired. Besides the rules of Latin poetry and rhetoric, they studied arithmetic and astronomy as laborious sciences.

Arithmetic.

In their arithmetic, before the introduction of the Arabian figures, they followed the path of the ancients, and chiefly studied the metaphysical distinctions of numbers. They divided the even numbers into the useless arrangement of equally equal, equally unequal, and unequally equal; and the odd numbers into the simple, the composite, and the mean. They

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considered them again, as even, or odd, superfluous, defective, or perfect, and under a variety of other distinctions, still more unnecessary for any practical application, which may be seen in the little tracts of Cassiodorus and Bede. Puzzled and perplexed with all this mazy jargon, Aldhelm might well say, that the labour of all his other acquisitions was small in the comparison with that which he endured in studying arithmetic. But that they attained great practical skill in calculation, the elaborate works of Bede sufficiently testify.

As all human ideas occur to the mind in some natural order of succession, and always connected with some previous remembrances and associations, the Anglo-Saxons could not become attached to the investigations of natural science, before preceding agencies had led them to attend to it. But all the impulses which were acting on their minds were operating in very different directions; and no general current in the world around them led them to anticipate the Arabs in the rich and unexplored country of experimental knowlege.

Bede's natural philosophy.

Yet our venerable Bede made some attempts to enter this new region; and his treatise on the nature of things[1] shows that he endeavoured to introduce the study of natural philosophy among the Anglo-Saxons.

This work has two great merits. It assembles into one focus the wisest opinions of the ancients on the subjects he discusses, and it continually refers the phenomena of nature to natural causes. The imperfect state of knowlege prevented him from discerning the true natural causes of many things, but the principal of referring the events and appearances of nature to its own laws and agencies displays a

[1] This is printed in the second volume of his works, p. 1., with the glosses of Bridferth of Ramsey, Joannes Noviomagus, and another.

mind of a sound philosophical tendency, and was calculated to lead his countrymen to a just mode of thinking on these subjects. Although to teach that thunder and lightning were the collisions of the clouds, and that earthquakes were the effect of winds rushing through the spongy caverns of the earth were erroneous deductions, yet they were light itself compared with the superstitions which other nations have attached to these phenomena. Such theories directed the mind into the right path of reasoning, though the correct series of the connected events and the operating laws had not then become known. The work of Bede is evidence that the establishment of the Teutonic nations in the Roman empire did not barbarise knowlege. He collected and taught more natural truths with fewer errors than any Roman book on the same subjects had accomplished. Thus his work displays an advance, not a retrogradation of human knowlege; and from its judicious selection and concentration of the best natural philosophy of the Roman empire, it does high credit to the Anglo-Saxon good sense. The following selections will convey a general idea of the substance of its contents: —

Expressing the ancient opinion, that the heavens turned daily round, while the planets opposed them by a contrary course[2]: he taught that the stars borrowed their light from the sun; that the sun was eclipsed by the intervention of the moon, and the moon by that of the earth; that comets were stars with hairy flames, and that the wind was moved and agitated air.[3] He said that the rainbow is formed in clouds of four colours, from the sun being opposite, whose rays being darted into the cloud are repelled back to the sun. The rain is the cloud compressed by the air into heavier drops than it can support, and that these frozen make the hail. Pestilence is produced from the air, either by excess of dryness, or of heat, or of wet.[4] The tides of the ocean follow the moon, as if they were drawn backwards by its aspiration, and poured back on its impulse being withdrawn. The earth is surrounded by the waters; it is a globe. Hence we see the northern stars but not the southern, because the globous

[2] De Rer. Nat. p. 6. [3] Ibid. p. 28. 30, 31. [4] Ibid. p. 38.

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figure of the earth intercepts them.[5] The volcano of Etna was the effect of fire and wind acting in the hollow sulphureous and bituminous earth of Sicily, and the barking dogs of Scylla were but the roaring of the waves in the whirlpools which seamen hear.[6] He had remarked the sparkling of the sea on a night upon the oars, and thought it was followed by a tempest. So the frequent leaping of porpoises from the water had caught his notice, and he connected it with the rise of wind, and the clearing of the sky.[7] He remarks, in another work, that sailors poured oil on the sea to make it more transparent.[8] He describes fully his ideas on the influence of the moon on the tides, and intimates that it also affects the air.[9] He speaks again of the roundness of the earth like a ball, and ascribes the inequality of days and nights to this globular rotundity.[10] He thinks the Antipodes a fable; but from no superstition, but because the ancients had taught that the torrid zone was uninhabitable and impassable. Yet he seems to admit, that between this and the parts about the South Pole, which he thought was a mass of congelation, there was some habitable land.[11] It was the probability of human existence in such circumstances, not such a local part of the earth, which Bede discredited.[12]

For the credit both of Bede and the Anglo-Saxons, I should have been glad to have been convinced that the four books De Elementis Philosophiæ, printed as is in his works, were actually his composition; for they display a spirit of investigation, a soundness of philosophical mind, and a quantity of just opinions

[5] De Rer. Nat. p. 39. 41. 43.

[6] Ibid. p. 49.

[7] Ibid. p. 37. He adds his presages on the weather. "If the sun arise spotted or shrouded with a cloud, it will be a rainy day; if red, a clear one: if pale, tempestuous; if it seem concave, so that, shining in the centre, it emits rays to the south and north, there will be wet and windy weather; if it fall pale into black clouds, the north wind is advancing; if the sky be red in the evening, the next day will be fine; if red in the morning, the weather will be stormy; lightning from the north, and thunder in the east, imply storm; and breezes from the south, announce heat; if the moon in her last quarter look like gold, there will be wind; if on the top of her crescent black spots appear, it will be a rainy month; if in the middle, her full moon will be serene."

[8] De Temporum Ratione, p. 56.

[9] Ibid. p. 110. 115.

[10] Ibid. p. 125.

[11] Ibid. p. 132. St. Austin had also denied the Antipodes, or persons with their feet below us, and their heads in the sky, as an incredible thing. He thought that this part of the globe was either covered with sea, or, if dry land, was not inhabited. De Civ. Dei. L. 16. c. 9.

[12] There are some tracts printed as Bede's, which would seem not to be his. As the Mundi Constitutio, in which he is himself quoted "Secundum Bedam de temporibus," vi. p. 375. And in the Argumenta Lunæ, the calculation is made for the year 936, or two hundred years after he lived, p. 197. The Astrolabium, p. 468., contains Arabic names, and the Prognostica foretells battles and pestilence at Corduba, p. 463.

on natural philosophy, that would do credit to any age before that of friar Bacon. But its merit compels us to suspect the possibility of its belonging to the eighth century. [13]

Their astronomy.

Their astronomy was such as they could comprehend in the Greek and Latin treatises which fell into their hands on this subject. Bede was indefatigable in studying it, and his treatises were translated into the Anglo-Saxon, of which some MSS. exist still in the Cotton Library. He appropriated all the practical results and reasonings of the Roman world, but did not cultivate the mathematical investigations of the Alexandrian Greeks. All the studious men applied to it more or less, though many used it for astrological superstitions. It was indeed then studied by all men of science in two divisions, and that which we call astrology, the legacy of the Chaldeans, was for a long time the most popular. It was, perhaps, on this account, rather than from a love of the nobler directions of the science, that our ancient chroniclers are usually minute in noticing the eclipses which occurred, and the comets and meteors which occasionally appeared. [14]

[13] The author speaks of England, p. 333., as if he belonged to it; but he also mentions the Antipodes as if he believed their existence, p. 336. He also says that a comet is not a star, p. 333.: both these opinions are different from Bede's. I have since observed that Fabricius ascribes it to Guilielmus de Conchis, Bib. Med. p. 502., a Norman who lived in the reign of Henry II.

[14] Even Bede says, the comet portends "change of kingdoms, or pestilence, or wars, or tempest, or drought." De Nat. Rer. p. 30. Alcuin thus describes an astronomical table sent to him by Charlemagne: "A round form like a table, resembling the sun, was brought to me. It had twenty-seven semicircles, which, if doubled, would make fifty-four. These were for the hours of the lunar course, which is accustomed to run through every sign. It had a round circle in the middle for the perpetual rotundity of the sun," p. 1490. He says of astronomy, "Philosophers were not the founders of these arts, but the finders of them; for the Creator of all things has concealed them in nature as He pleased. They who have been wisest in the world have discerned those sciences in the nature of things, which you may easily understand of the sun, moon, and stars. But what else ought we to admire in these bodies, but the wisdom of their Creator, and their natural movements? But if the wise have found out these things, it would be a great disgrace to us if we should suffer them to perish in our days," p. 1492. He answers Charlemagne's questions about them. From his Epist. 5. we find that Charlemagne had read our Bede's work De Temporibus.

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The astronomical opinions which they had imbibed from their classical masters were probably as good as their books could supply, or their scholars understand. Elfric has transmitted to us, out of Alcuin, their acquired opinions on the motions of the heavens, which may be thus translated:—

"The earth consists of four creatures, or elements; fire, air, water, and earth. The nature of fire is hot and dry; of air, warm and wet; of water, cold and wet; of earth, cold and dry. Heaven is of the nature of fire, and it is always turning the stars. Foreign writers have said that it would fall, on account of its swiftness, if the seven wandering stars (dweligendan steorran) did not resist its course. The stars of heaven are always turning round the earth from east to west, and strive against the seven wandering stars. These are called erring or wandering stars (dweligende or worigende), not because of any error, but because each of them goeth on in its own course, sometimes above, sometimes below, and are not fast in the firmament of heaven, as the other stars are. The farthest the heathen calls Saturnus; he fulfilleth his course in thirty years. The one beneath Saturn they call Jove, and he fulfilleth his course in twelve years. The third, that goeth beneath Jove, they call Mars; and he fulfilleth his course in two years. The fourth is the Sun; she fulfilleth her course in twelve months; that is, three hundred and sixty-five days. The fifth is called Venus; she fulfilleth her course in three hundred and sixty-eight days. The sixth is Mercury, great and bright; he fulfilleth his course in three hundred and twenty-nine days. The seventh is the Moon, the lowest of all the stars; she fulfilleth her course in twenty-seven days and eight hours. These seven stars move to the east, in opposition to the heavens, and are stronger than they are." [15]

Their geography.

Their geographical knowlege must have been much improved by Adamnan's account of his visit to the Holy Land, which Bede abridged; and by the sketch given of general geography in Orosius, which Alfred made the property of all his countrymen, by his translation and masterly additions. The eight hides of land given by his namesake for a MS. of cosmographical treatises [16], of wonderful workmanship, may have been conceded rather to the beauty of the MS. than to its contents. But, notwithstanding these

[15] Elfric's Lives of the Saints, MS. Cott. Julius, E. 7.
[16] Bede, 799.

helps, the most incorrect and absurd notions seem to have prevailed among our ancestors concerning the other parts of the globe, if we may judge from the MS. treatises on this subject, which they took the trouble to adorn with drawings, and sometimes to translate. Two of these are in the Cotton Library; and a short notice of their contents may not be uninteresting, as a specimen of their geographical and physical knowlege.

The MS. Tib. B. 5. contains a topographical description of some eastern regions, in Latin and Saxon. From this we learn there is a place in the way to the Red Sea, which contains red hens, and that if any man touches them, his hand and all his body are burnt immediately: also, that pepper is guarded by serpents, which are driven away by fire, and this makes the pepper black. We read of people with dog's heads, boars' tusks, and horses' manes, and breathing flames. Also of ants as big as dogs, with feet like grashoppers, red and black. These creatures dig gold for fifteen days. Men go with female camels, and their young ones, to fetch it, which the ants permit, on having the liberty to eat the young camels.[17]

The same learned work informed our ancestors that there was a white human race fifteen feet high, with two faces on one head, long nose, and black hair, who in the time of parturition went to India to lie in. Other men had thighs twelve feet long, and breasts seven feet high. They were cannibals. There was another sort of mankind with no heads, who had eyes and mouths in their breasts. They were eight feet tall, and eight feet broad. Other men had eyes which shone like a lamp in a dark night. In the ocean there was a soft-voiced race, who were human to the navel, but all below were the limbs of an ass. These fables even came so near as Gaul: for it tells us that in Liconia, in Gaul, there were men of three colours, with heads like lions, and mouths like the sails of a windmill. They were twenty feet tall. They ran away, and sweat blood, but were thought to be men. Let us, however, in justice to our ancestors, recollect that most of these fables are gravely recorded by Pliny. The Anglo-Saxons were, therefore, not more credulous or uninformed than the Roman population.

The descriptions of foreign ladies were not very gallant. It is stated that near Babylon there were women with beards to their breasts. They were clothed in horses' hides, and were great hunters, but they used tigers and leopards instead of dogs. Other

[17] This was probably a popular notion; for it is said among their prognostics, that if the sun shine on the fourth day, the camels will bring much gold from the ants, who keep the gold hoards. MSS. CCC. Cant. Wanl. 110.

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women had boars' tushes, hair to their heels, and a cow's tail. They were thirteen feet high. They had a beautiful body, as white as marble, but they had camel's feet. Black men living on burning mountains; trees bearing precious stones; and a golden vineyard which had berries one hundred and fifty feet long, which produced jewels; gryphons, phœnixes, and beasts with asses' ears, sheep's wool, and birds' feet, are among the other wonders which instructed our ancestors. The accounts in the MS. Vitellius, A. 15., rival the phenomena just recited, with others as credible, and are also illustrated with drawings.

We find from Alcuin's letter, that the students in Charlemagne's institutions began the year from the month of September. He says he wonders why they did so, p. 1496.

We cannot now get at the national opinions of the Anglo-Saxons on physical subjects in any other way than by observing what things they thought worthy to be committed to writing. They who could write were among the most informed part of the Saxon society, and as their parchment materials were scanty, it seems reasonable to suppose that what they employed themselves in writing stood high in their estimation. We will add a few things which are in Anglo-Saxon in a MS. in the Cotton Library.

"Istorius said that this world's length is twelve thousand miles, and its breadth six thousand three hundred, besides the islands. There are thirty-four kinds of snakes on the earth; thirty-six kinds of fish, and fifty-two kinds of flying fowls. The name of the city to which the sun goes up is called Jaiaca; the city where it sets is Jainta. Asguges, the magician, said that the sun was of burning stone. The sun is red in the first part of the morning, because he comes out of the sea; he is red in the evening, because he looks over hell. The sun is bigger than the earth, and hence he is hot in every country. The sun shines at night in three places; first in Leviathan the whale's inside. He shines next in hell, and afterwards on the islands named Glith, and there the souls of holy men remain till doomsday. Neither the sun nor the moon shines on the Red Sea, nor does the wind blow upon it."

Some excellent moral and prudential maxims follow in the MS. [18]

Their views on philosophy.

The Anglo-Saxon scholars, though defective in actual knowlege, had just conceptions of the objects of philosophy. Thus Alcuin defines it to be the

[18] MS. Cott. Lib. Julius, A. 2.

research into natural things, and the knowlege of divine and human affairs. He distinguishes it into knowlege and opinion. He describes it to be knowlege, when a thing is perceived with certainty, as that an eclipse of the sun is caused by the intervention of the moon; but that it is only opinion when it is uncertain, as the magnitude of heaven or the depth of the earth.[19]

He divides philosophy into three branches; physics, ethics, and logic. But in his further considerations he exhibits not so much the deficiencies of the Anglo-Saxon mind, as the imperfect state of the knowlege which former times had handed down to it; for all the subjects which he comprises in physics are, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. That extensive field of science to which we now almost exclusively apply the name of physics, natural philosophy, had not been discovered or attended to by the Greeks and Romans; and still less chemistry, mineralogy, and the analogous sciences. The Anglo-Saxon scholars formed themselves chiefly on the Roman writers, and in general did not go beyond them. Alcuin gives us another train of definitions in physics:—

"Physic is nature; physica is natural: it discusses the nature and contemplation of all things. From physica proceed arithmetic, astronomy, astrology, mechanics, medicine, geometry, and music.

Arithmetic is the science of numbers.

Astronomy is the law of the stars, by which they rise and set.

Astrology is the reason, and nature, and power of the stars, and the conversion of the heavens.

Mechanics is the first skilfulness of the art of working in metals, wood, and stones.

Medicine is the knowlege of remedies discovered for the temperament and health of the body.

Geometry is the science of measuring spaces, and the magnitudes of bodies.

Music is the division of sounds, the varieties of the voice, and the modulation of singing."[20]

[19] Alc. Dialectica, p. 1356.

[20] Alb. Op. p. 1353.

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It is amusing to observe, in the absence of solid knowlege, on what elaborate trifling the Anglo-Saxons sometimes employed themselves. The following is a dialogue of Alcuin, with prince Pepin, the son of Charlemagne:—it is the scholar who questions:—

"What is a letter? — The keeper of history.
What is a word? — The betrayer of the mind.
What produces words? — The tongue.
What is the tongue? — The scourge of the air.
What is air? — The preserver of life.
What is life? — The gladness of the blessed; the sorrow of the wretched; the expectation of death.
What is death? — the inevitable event; the uncertain pilgrimage; the tears of the living; the confirmation of our testament; the thief of man.
What is man? — The slave of death; a transient traveller; a local guest.
What is man like? — An apple.
How is man placed? — As a lamp in the wind.
Where is he placed? — Between six walls.
What? — Above, below, before, behind, on the right, and on the left.
How many companions has he? — Four.
Whom? — Heat, cold, dryness, wet.
In how many ways is he changeable? — Six.
Which are they? — Hunger, fulness; rest, labour; watchings and sleep.
What is sleep? — The image of death.
What is man's liberty? — Innocence.
What is the head? — The crown of the body.
What is the body? — The home of the mind.
What are the hairs? — The garments of the head.
What is the beard? — The discrimination of sex; the honour of age.
What is the brain? — The preserver of the memory.
What are the eyes? — The leaders of the body; vessels of light; the index of the mind.
What are the ears? — The collators of sounds.
What is the forehead? — The image of the mind.
What is the mouth? — The nourisher of the body.
What are the teeth? — The millstones of our food.
What are the lips? — The doors of the mouth.
What is the throat? — The devourer of the food.
What are the hands? — The workmen of the body.
What is the heart? — The receptacle of life.
What is the liver? — The keeper of our heat.
What is the spleen? — The source of laughter and mirth.

What are the bones? — The strength of the body.
What are the thighs? — The capitals of our pillars.
What are the legs? — The pillars of the body.
What are the feet? — Our moveable foundation.
What is the blood? — The moisture of the veins; the aliment of life.
What are the veins? — The fountains of flesh.
What is heaven? — A rotatory sphere.
What is light? — The face of all things.
What is day? — The incitement of labour.
What is the sun? — The splendour of the world; the beauty of heaven; the grace of nature; the honour of day; the distributor of the hours.
What is the moon? — The eye of night; the giver of dew; the prophetess of the weather.
What are the stars? — The paintings of the summit of nature; the seaman's pilots; the ornaments of night.
What is rain? — The earth's conception; the mother of corn.
What is a cloud? — The night of day; the labour of the eyes.
What is wind? — The perturbation of air; the moving principle of water; the dryer of earth.
What is the earth? — The mother of the growing; the nurse of the living; the storehouse of life; the devourer of all things.
What is the sea? — The path of audacity; the boundary of the earth; the divider of regions; the receptacle of the rivers; the fountain of showers; the refuge in danger; the favourer of pleasures.
What are rivers? — Motion never-ceasing; the refection of the sun; the irrigators of the earth.
What is water? — The ally of life; the washer of filth.
What is fire? — Excess of heat; the nourisher of the new-born; the maturer of fruits.
What is cold? — The ague of the limbs.
What is frost? — The persecutor of herbs; the destroyer of leaves; the fetter of the earth; the source of the waters.
What is snow? — Dry water.
What is winter? — The banishment of summer.
What is spring? — The painter of the earth.
What is summer? — The re-clothing of earth; the ripener of corn.
What is autumn? — The granary of the year.
What is the year? — The chariot of the world.
What does it carry? — Night and day; cold and heat.
Who are its drivers? — The sun and moon.
How many are its palaces? — Twelve.
What is a ship? — A wandering house; a perpetual inn; a traveller without footsteps; the neighbour of the sands.
What is the sand? — The wall of the earth.
What makes bitter things sweet? — Hunger.
What makes men never weary? — Gain.
What gives sleep to the watching? — Hope.

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What is a wonder? — I saw a man standing; a dead man walking who never existed.

How could this be? — An image in water.

An unknown person, without tongue or voice spoke to me, who never existed before, nor has existed since, nor ever will be again: and whom I neither heard nor knew? — It was your dream.

I saw the dead produce the living, and by the breath of the living the dead were consumed? — From the friction of trees fire was produced, which consumed.

I saw fire pause in the water unextinguished? — From flint.

Who is that whom you cannot see unless you shut your eyes? — He who sneezes will show him to you.

I saw a man with eight in his hand, he took away seven, and six remained? — School-boys know this.

Who is he that will rise higher if you take away his head? — Look at your bed and you will find him there.

I saw a flying woman with an iron beak, a wooden body, and a feathered tail, carrying death? — She is a companion of soldiers.

What is that which is, and is not? — Nothing.

How can a thing be, yet not exist? — In name and not in fact.

What is a silent messenger? — That which I hold in my hand.

What is that? — My letter." [21]

Their chemistry.

It would be absurd to talk about their chemistry, as they had none; but their methods of preparing gold for their gold writing may be mentioned, as they were in fact so many chemical experiments.

One method. "File gold very finely, put it in a mortar, and add the sharpest vinegar; rub it till it becomes black, and then pour it out. Put to it some salt or nitre, and so it will dissolve. So you may write with it, and thus all the metals may be dissolved."

The gold letters of the Anglo-Saxon MSS. are on a white embossment, which is probably a calcareous preparation. Modern gilding is made on an oil size of yellow ochre, or on a water size of gypsum, or white oxide of lead, or on similar substances. For gilding on paper or parchment, gold powder is now used as much as leaf gold. Our ancestors used both occasionally.

Another method of ancient chrysography: "Melt some lead, and frequently immerge it in cold water. Melt gold, and pour that into the same water, and it will become brittle. Then rub the gold

[21] Alb. Op. p. 1385—1392.

filings carefully with quicksilver, and purge it carefully while it is liquid. Before you write, dip the pen in liquid alum, which is best purified by salt and vinegar."

Another method:—

"Take thin plates of gold and silver, rub them in a mortar with Greek salt or nitre till it disappears. Pour on water and repeat it. Then add salt, and so wash it. When the gold remains even, add a moderate portion of the flowers of copper and bullock's gall; rub them together, and write and burnish the letters."

Other methods are mentioned, by which even marble and glass might be gilt. These descriptions are taken by Muratori from a MS. of the ninth century, which contains many other curious receipts on this subject.[22]

They had the art of secret writing, by substituting other letters for the five vowels: thus,

| b | f | k | p | x |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | e | i | o | u |

The MS. in the Cotton Library gives several examples of this[23]:—

nýƿ thkƿ ƿpƿxƿn ƿyllkc thknc to pæbƿnnƿ
pmnkxm knkmkcprxm sxprxm dpmknbktxr
kn npmknf dk sxmmk.

Which are,

nýƿ thiƿ ƿpeȝen ƿýllic thinc to pæbƿnne
omnium inimicorum suorum dominabitur.
In nomine Di summi.

Among the disorders which afflicted the Anglo-Saxons, we find instances of the scrofula, the gout, or foot adl; fever, or gedrif; paralysis, hemiplegia, ague, dysentery; consumption, or lungs adl; convulsions, madness, blindness, diseased head, the headach (heafod-ece), and tumours in various parts.[24]

Their medicine.

[22] Tom. ii. p. 375—383.

[23] Vitellius, E. 18. One of Aldhelm's poems is addressed to a pen, and seems to imply that quills were then used by some for writing, though styles continued to be employed to a later age.

[24] Malmsb. 285. Bonif. Lett. 16. M.B. 115. Bede, 86. 509. 3 Gale, 470. Eddius, 44. Bede, 372. iv. 23. 31. iii. 12. iv. 6.; 224. 236. 256. Ingulf, 11. Bede, 297. iii. 11.; iv. 3.; 10. v. 2.; 246.; 235. iv. 19.

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But if we consider the charms which they had against diseases as evidence of the existence of those diseases, then the melancholy catalogue may be increased by the addition of the poccas (pustules), sore eyes and ears, blegen and blacan blegene (blains and boils), elfsidenne (the night-mare), cyrnla (indurated glands), toth-ece, aneurisms (wennas et mannes, heortan), and some others.[25] The king's evil is mentioned in a letter from pope Zachary to Boniface.[26]

Nations in every age and climate have considered diseases to be the inflictions of evil beings, whose power exceeded that of man. Adapting their practice to their theory, many have met the calamity by methods which were the best adapted, according to their system, to remove them; that is, they attacked spells by spells. They opposed charms and exorcisms to what they believed to be the work of demoniacal incantations. The Anglo-Saxons had the same superstitions: their pagan ancestors had referred diseases to such causes; and believing the principle, they resorted to the same remedies. Hence we have in their MSS. a great variety of incantations and exorcisms, against the disorders which distressed them.

When some of their stronger intellects had attained to discredit these superstitions, and especially after Christianity opened to them a new train of associations, this system of diseases originating from evil spirits, and of their being curable by magical phrases, received a fatal blow. It had begun to decline before they were enlightened by any just medical knowlege; and the consequence was, that they had nothing to substitute in the stead of charms but the fancies and pretended experience of those who arrogated knowlege on the subject. Before men began to take up

[25] Cal. A. 15. CCC. Cant. Wanley. 115. Tit. D. 26. Wanley Cant. 304, 305.
[26] Mag. Bib. Pat. vol. xvi. p. 115.

medicine as a profession, the domestic practice of it would, of course, fall on females, who, in every stage of society, assume the kind task of nursing sickness; and of these, the aged, as the most experienced, would be preferred.

But the Anglo-Saxons, so early as the seventh century, had men who made the science of medicine a study, and who practised it as a profession. It is probable that they owed this invaluable improvement to the Christian clergy, who not only introduced books from Rome, but who, in almost every monastery, had one brother who was consulted as the physician of the place. We find physicians frequently mentioned in Bede; and among the letters of Boniface there is one from an Anglo-Saxon, desiring some books de medicinalibus. He says they had plenty of such books in England, but that the foreign drawings in them were unknown to his countrymen, and difficult to acquire.[27]

We have a splendid instance of the attention they gave to medical knowlege, in the Anglo-Saxon medical treatise described by Wanley, which he states to have been written about the time of Alfred. The first part of it contains eighty-eight remedies against various diseases; the second part adds sixty-seven more, and in the third part are seventy-six. Some lines between the second and third part state it to have been possessed by one BALD, and to have been written at his command by Cild. It is probably a compilation from the Latin medical writers. Wanley presumes that Bald wrote it; but the words imply rather possession than authorship.[28] Their construction is ambiguous.

We find several Saxon MSS. of medical botany. There is one, a translation of the Herbarium of Apu-

[27] Mag. Bib. Pat. xvi. 82.

[28] Bald habet hunc librum Cild quem conscribere jussit. Wanl. Cat. 180.

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leius, with some good drawings of herbs and flowers, in the Cotton Library. Their remedies were usually vegetable medicines.[29]

Their surgery.

We have a few hints of their surgical attentions, but they seem not to have exceeded those common operations which every people, a little removed from barbarism, cannot fail to know and to use.

We read of a skull fractured by a fall from a horse, which the surgeon closed and bound up[30]; of a man whose legs and arms were broken by a fall, which the surgeons cured by tight ligatures[31]; and of a diseased head, in the treatment of which the medical attendants were successful.[32] But we find many cases in which their efforts were unavailing: thus in an instance of a great swelling on the eyelid, which grew daily, and threatened the loss of the sight, the surgeons exhausted their skill to no purpose, and declared that it must be cut off.[33] In a case of a great swelling, with burning heat, on the neck, where the necklace came, it was laid open to let out the noxious matter; this treatment gave the patient ease for two days, but on the third the pains returned, and she died.[34] Another person had his knee swelled, and the muscles of his leg drawn up till it became a contracted limb. Medical aid is said to have been exhibited in vain, till an angel advised wheat flour to be boiled in milk, and the limb to be poulticed with it, applied while warm.[35] To recover his frozen feet, a person put them into the bowels of a horse.[36]

Venesection was in use. We read of a man bled in the arm. The operation seem to have been done unskilfully, for a great pain came on while bleeding, and the arm swelled very much.[37] Their lancet was called æder seax, or vein knife. But their practice of phle-

[29] MS. Cott. Vitel. c. 3.
[30] Bede, v. c. 6.
[31] Eddius, p. 63.
[32] Bede, v. 2.
[33] Bede, iv. 32.
[34] Ibid. p. 19.
[35] Ibid. p. 230.
[36] Malmsb. 201.
[37] Bede, v. 2.

botomy was governed by the most mischievous superstition; it was not used when expediency required, but when their superstitions permitted. They marked the seasons and the days on which they believed that bleeding would be fatal. Even Theodore the monk, to whom they owed so much of their literature, added to their follies on this subject, by imparting the notion that it was dangerous to bleed when the light of the moon and the tides were increasing.[38] According to the rules laid down in an Anglo-Saxon MS., the second, third, fifth, sixth, ninth, eleventh, fifteenth, seventeenth, and twentieth days of the month were bad days for bleeding. On the tenth, thirteenth, nineteenth, twenty-first, twenty-third, twenty-fourth, twenty-fifth, twenty-sixth, and twenty-eighth days, it was hurtful to bleed, except during certain hours of the days. The rest of the month was proper for phlebotomy.[39] They had their tales to support their credulity. Thus we read of "sum læce, or a physician, who let his horse blood on one of these days, and it lay soon dead."[40]

We will add, as a specimen of their medical charms, their incantation to cure a fever.

"In nomine dni nri Ihu Xpi tera tera tera testis contera taberna gise ges mande leis bois eis andies mandies moab leb lebes Dns ds adjutor sit illi ill eax filiax artifex am."[41]

Two of their medicines may be added, one for the cure of consumption, the other for the gout.

With lungen adle.—"Take hwite hare hunan (white horehound), and ysypo (hyssop), and rudan (rue), and galluc (sowbread), and brysewyrt, and brunwyrt (brown wort), and wude merce (parsley), and grundeswylian (groundsel), of each twenty penny-weights, and take one sester[42] full of old ale, and seethe the

[38] Bede, v. 3.
[39] MS. Cott. Lib. Tiber. A. 3.
[40] Ibid. 126.
[41] Ibid. 125.
[42] The quantity of a sester appears, from the following curious list of Anglo-Saxon weights and measures, to have been fifteen pints:—

Punð eleƿ ȝepihtþ xii penegum læƿƿe þonne punð pætneƿ.
Punð ealoþ ȝepihtþ vi penegum mape þoñ punð pætneƿ.

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herbs till the liquor be half boiled away. Drink every day fasting a neap-full cold, and in the evening as much warm."

With fot adle (the gout).—"Take the herb datulus or titulosa, which we call greata crauleac (tuberose isis). Take the heads of it, and dry them very much, and take thereof a penny-weight and a half, and the pear-tree and roman bark, and cummin, and a fourth part of laurel-berries, and of the other herbs half a penny-weight of each, and six pepper-corns, and grind all to dust, and put two egg-shells full of wine. This is true leechcraft. Give it to the man to drink till he be well."[43]

Punð pinep ȝepihth xv penegum mope thoñ ı punð pætpep.
Punð hunigep ȝepihth xxxiv penegum mope thoñ punð pætpep.
Punð butepan ȝepihth lxxx penegum læppe thoñ punð pætpep.
Punð beopep ȝepihth xxii penegum læppe thoñ punð pætpep.
Punð melopep ȝepihth cxv penegum æppe thoñ punð pætpep.
Punð beana ȝepihth lv penegum læppe thoñ punð pætpep.
Anð xv punð pætpep ȝath to beptpe. Saxon MS. ap. Wanley Cat. p. 179.

[43] MS. Cott. Lib. Vitell. c. 3.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *The* Anglo-Saxon *Metaphysics.*

CHAP. VIII.

Their metaphysics.

The three men of letters among the Anglo-Saxon who handled any branch of the metaphysical subjects, besides Alfred, were Bede, Alcuin, and Joannes Erigena.

Bede on substances.

It is in the tract on substances that Bede's metaphysical tendencies appear.

He compares the three inseparable essences of the Trinity to the circularity, light, and heat of the sun. The globular body of the sun never leaves the heavens; but its light, which he compares to the Filial Personality, and its heat, which he applies to the Spiritual Essence, descend to earth, and diffuse themselves every where, animating the mind, and pervading and softening the heart. Yet, although universally present, light seems never to quit the sun, for there we always behold it; and heat is its unceasing companion. As circles have neither beginning nor end, such is the Deity. Nothing is above; nothing is below; nothing is beyond him; no term concludes him; no time confines him.[1]

He pursues the same analogies in other parts of nature. In water he traces the spring; its flowing river, and terminating lake. They differ in form, but are one in substance, and are always inseparable. No river can flow without its spring, and must issue into some collecting locality.[2]

Alcuin on the soul.

In his treatise on the soul, Alcuin, in a short but rational essay, discusses its faculties and nature. A few selections may interest.

[1] Bede de Subst. vol. ii. p. 304—306.

[2] Ibid. p. 307. His view of nature is not unpleasing. "Observe how all things are made to suit, and are governed: heat by cold; cold by heat; day by night; and winter by summer. See how the heavens and the earth are respectively adorned: the heavens by the sun, the moon, and stars; the earth by its beautiful flowers, and its herbs, trees, and fruits. From these mankind derive all their food; their lovely jewels; the various pictures so delectably woven in their hangings and valuable cloths; their variegated colours; the sweet melody of strings and organs; the splendor of gold and silver, and the other metals; the pleasant streams of water, so necessary to bring ships, and agitate our mills; the fragrant aroma of myrrh; and, lastly, the interesting countenance peculiar to the human form." p. 308.

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He distinguishes in it a three-fold nature: the appetitive; the rational, and the irascible. Two of these we have in common with animals; but man alone reasons, counsels, and excels in intelligence. The rational faculty should govern the others: its virtues are, prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude; and if these be made perfect by benevolence, they bring the soul near to the Divine nature.[3]

"The memory, the will, and the intelligence, are all distinct, yet one. Though each be separate, they are perfectly united. I perceive that I perceive, will, and remember; I will to remember, perceive, and will; and I remember that I have willed, perceived, and recollected.[4]

"We may remark the wonderful swiftness of the soul in forming things which it has perceived by the senses. From these, as from certain messengers, it forms figures in itself, with inexpressible celerity, of whatever it has perceived of sensible things; and it lays up these forms in the treasury of its memory.

"Thus, he who has seen Rome figures Rome in his mind, and its form; and when he shall hear the name of Rome, or remember it, immediately the animus of it will occur to the memory, where its form lies concealed. The soul there recognises it, where it had hidden it.

"It is yet more wonderful, that if unknown things be read or heard of by the ears of the soul, it immediately forms a figure of the unknown thing; as of Jerusalem. When seen it may be very different from the figure of our fancy: but whatever the soul has seen in other cities that are known to it, it imagines may be in Jerusalem, From known species it images the unknown. It does not fancy walls, houses, and streets in a man; nor the limbs of a man in a city, but buildings, as are usual in cities. So in every thing. The mind from the known forms the unknown.

"While I think of Jerusalem, I cannot, at that moment, think of Rome; or when I think of any other single thing, I cannot then think of many; but that thing only is present to my mind which I deliberate upon, till, sooner or later, this departs and another occurs.

"This lively and heavenly faculty, which is called mens, or animus, is of such great mobility that it does not even rest in sleep. In a moment, if it chooses, it surveys heaven; it flies over the sea, and wanders through regions and cities. It places in its sight, by thinking, all things that it likes, however far removed.[5]

"The mind, or soul, is the intellectual spirit, always in motion, always living, and capable of willing both good and evil. By the benignity of its Creator it is ennobled with free will. Created to rule the movements of the flesh, it is invisible, incorporeal; without weight or colour; circumscribed, yet entire in every member of its flesh. It is now afflicted with the cares, and grieved with the pains of the body; now it sports with joy; now thinks of

[3] Albini Opera, p. 770. [4] Ibid. p. 773. [5] Ibid. p. 773—775.

known things; and now seeks to explore those which are unknown. It wills some things; it does not will others. Love is natural to it.

"It is called by various names: the soul, while it vivifies; the spirit, when it contemplates; sensibility, while it feels; the mind, when it knows; the intellect, when it understands; the reason, while it discriminates; the will, when it consents; the memory, when it remembers; but these are not as distinct in substance as in names: they are but one soul. Virtue is its beauty; vice its deformity. It is often so affected by some object of knowlege, that, though its eyes be open, it sees not the things before it, nor hears a sounding voice; nor feels a touching body.

"As to what the soul is, nothing better occurs to us to say than that it is the spirit of life; but not of that kind of life which is in cattle, which is without a rational mind. The beauty and ornament of the human soul is the study of wisdom. What is more blessed to the soul than to love the Supreme Good, which is God? What is happier to it than to prepare itself to be worthy of everlasting beatitude, knowing itself most truly to be immortal?"[6]

Erigena on the division of nature.

But the most metaphysical treatise that appeared among the Anglo-Saxons was the elaborate work, or dialogue, of Joannes Scotus, or Erigena, the friend of Alfred and Charlemagne, on nature and its distinctions. It emulates the sublimest researches of the Grecians. It is too long to be analysed; but a few extracts from its commencement may be acceptable, to show his style of thought and expression:—

"Nature may be divided into that which creates, and is not created; that which is created, and creates; that which is created, and does not create; and that which neither creates nor is created.[7]

"The essences (or what, from Aristotle, in those days they called the substance) of all visible or invisible creatures cannot be comprehended by the intellect; but whatever is perceived in every thing, or by the corporeal sense, is nothing else but an accident, which is known either, by its quality or quantity, form, matter, or differences, or by its place or time. Not what it is, but how it is.

"The first order of being is the Deity: He is the essence of all things.

"The second begins from the most exalted, intellectual virtue nearest about the Deity, and descends from the sublimest angel to the lowest part of the rational and irrational creation. The three

[6] Albini Opera, p. 776—778.

[7] Joan. Erig. de Divisione Naturæ, p. 1.

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superior orders are, 1st, The Cherubim, Seraphim, and Thrones. The 2d, The Virtues, Powers, and Dominations. The 3d, The Principalities, Archangels, and Angels.

"The cause of all things is far removed from those which have been created by it. Hence the reasons of created things, that are eternally and unchangeably in it, must be also wholly removed from their subjects.

"In the angelic intellects there are certain theophanies of these reasons; that is, certain comprehensible, divine apparitions of the intellectual nature. The divine essence is fully comprehensible by no intelligent creature.

"Angels see not the causes themselves of things which subsist in the Divine essence; but certain divine apparitions, or theophanies, of the eternal causes whose images they are. In this manner angels always behold God. So the just in this life, while in the extremity of death, and in the future, will see him as the angels do.

"We do not see him by Himself, because angels do not. This is not possible to any creature. But we shall contemplate the theophanies which he shall make upon us, each according to the height of his sanctity and wisdom."[8]

[8] Joan. Erig. de Divisione Naturæ, p. 1—4.

## CHAP. IX.

### *The Arts of the* ANGLO-SAXONS.

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Their music.

THE art of music has been as universal as poetry; but like poetry, has every where existed in different degrees of refinement. Among rude nations, it is in a rude and noisy state; among the more civilised it has attained all the excellence which science, taste, feeling, and delicate organisation can give.

We derive the greatest portion of our most interesting music from harmony of parts; and we attain all the variety of expression and scientific combination which are familiar to us, by the happy use of our musical notation. The ancients were deficient in both these respects, it has not been ascertained that they had harmony of parts, and therefore all their instruments and voices were in unison; and so miserable was their notation, that it has been contended by the learned, with every appearance of truth, that they had no other method of marking time than by the quantity of the syllables of the words placed over the notes. Saint Jerome might therefore well say on music, "Unless they are retained by the memory, sounds perish, because they cannot be written."[1]

The ancients, so late as the days of Cassiodorus, or the sixth century, used three sorts of musical instruments, which he calls the percussionalia, the tensibilia, and the inflatila. The percussionalia were silver or brazen dishes, or such things as, when struck with some force, yielded a sweet ringing. The ten-

[1] Jerom. ad Dard. de Mus. Instr. — Guido, by his invention of our musical notation, removed this complaint.

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sibilia he describes to have consisted of chords, tied with art, which, on being struck with a plectrum, soothed the ear with a delightful sound, as the various kinds of cytharæ. The inflatila were wind instruments, as tubæ, calami, organa, panduria, and such like.[2]

The Anglo-Saxons had the instruments of chords, and wind-instruments.

In the drawings on their MSS. we see the horn, trumpet, flute, and harp, and a kind of lyre of four strings, struck by a plectrum.

In one MS. we see a musician striking the four-stringed lyre, while another is accompanying him with two flutes, into which he is blowing at the same time.[3]

In the MSS. which exhibit David with three musicians playing together. David has a harp of eleven strings, which he holds with his left hand while he plays with his right fingers; another is playing on a violin or guitar of four strings with a bow; another blows a short trumpet, supported in the middle by a pole, while another blows a curved horn.[4] This was probably the representation of an Anglo-Saxon concert.

The chord instrument like a violin was perhaps that to which a disciple of Bede alludes, when he expresses how delighted he should be to have "a player who could play on the cithara, which we call rotæ."[5]

Of the harp, Bede mentions, that in all festive companies it was handed round, that every one might sing in turn.[6] It must therefore have been in very common use.

[2] Cassiod. Op. ii. p. 507.
[3] MS. Cott. Cleop. C. 8.
[4] MS. Cott. Tib. C. 6.
[5] Mag. Bib. xvi. p. 88. Snorre calls the musicians in the court of an ancient king of Sweden "Leckara, Harpara, Gigiara, Fidlara." Yng. Saga, c. xxv. p. 30.
[6] Bede, lib. iv. c. 24.

Dunstan is also described by his biographer to have carried with him to a house his cythara, "which in our language we call hearpan."[7] He hung it against the wall, and one of the strings happening to sound untouched, it was esteemed a miracle.

Anglo-Saxon organ.

The organ was in use among the Anglo-Saxons. Cassiodorus and Fortunatus mention the word organ as a musical instrument, but it has been thought to have been a collection of tubes blowed into by the human breath. Muratori has contended, that the art of making organs like ours was known in the eighth century only to the Greeks; that the first organ in Europe was the one sent to Pepin from Greece in 756; and that it was in 826 that a Venetian priest who had discovered the secret, brought it into France.[8]

A passage which I observed in Aldhelm's poem, De Laude Virginum, entirely overthrows these theories; for he, who died in 709, and who never went to Greece, describes them in a manner which shows that he was acquainted with great organs made on the same principle as our own:—

Maxima millenis auscultans organa flabris
Mulceat auditum ventosis follibus iste
Quamlibet auratis fulgescant cætera capsis.[9]

[7] MS. Cleop. Among the old poetry of Finland is the description of an ancient Finnish harp, which represents it to have been made of birch wood with oaken keys and horse-hair strings. As the Saxons or Danes may have so constructed theirs, I insert the passage as an indication how the ruder nations of Europe made their harps.

He the aged Waina moinen
Up the rock his boat has lifted;
On its height the harp created.
Whence the concave harp created?
From the body of the birch tree.
And the harp's keys; whence created?
From the oak tree's equal branches.
And the harp's strings; whence created?
From the tail of mighty stallion.
From the stallion's tail of Lempo.
Lenquist de Super. Fin. p. 36. W. Rev. 14. p. 325.

[8] Murat. de Art. Ital. ii. p. 357.

[9] Max. Bib. Pat. xiii. 3. Dr. Lingard, after liberally mentioning that this passage in Aldhelm "was first discovered" by the author of this History, cites

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This is, literally,

'Listening to the greatest organs with a thousand blasts, the ear is soothed by the windy bellows, while the rest shines in the gilt chests."

Another evidence of the antiquity of organs among the Anglo-Saxons has occurred to my observation in the works of BEDE, a contemporary and surviver of Aldhelm. The passage is express, and also shows how they were made: —

"An organum is a kind of tower made with various pipes, from which, by the blowing of bellows, a most copious sound is issued; and that a becoming modulation may accompany this, it is furnished with certain wooden tongues from the interior part, which the master's fingers skilfully repressing, produce a grand and also a most sweet melody." [10]

Dunstan, great in all the knowlege of his day, as well as in his ambition, is described to have made an organ of brass pipes, elaborated by musical measures, and filled with air from the bellows.[11] The bells he made have been mentioned before. About the same time we have the description of an organ made in the church at Ramsey:—

"The earl devoted thirty pounds to make the copper pipes of organs, which, resting with their openings in thick order on the spiral winding in the inside, and being struck on feast days with the strong blast of bellows, emit a sweet melody and a far resounding peal." [12]

the quotation from Mon. Gall. Vit. Car. c. 10., which describes the organ sent to Pepin from Constantine the Byzantine emperor; and justly adds, "The French artists were eager to equal this specimen of Grecian ingenuity, and were so successful, that in the ninth century the best organs were made in France and Germany. Their superiority was acknowleged by John VIII. in a letter to Anno, Bishop of Freisingen, from whom he requested an organ and a master for the instruction of the Roman musicians. Sandini Vit. Pont. i. p. 241. Soon after this period, they were common in England, and constructed by English artists." Angl. Sax. Church. ii. p. 282. John VIII. was Pope in 854, and is the person that has been called or thought to be Pope Joan.

[10] Bede, Op. vol. viii. p. 1062. [11] Gale, iii. 366.

[12] Ibid. 420. Another Anglo-Saxon organ is fully described in the tenth century by the monk Wolstan, which was erected in Winchester cathedral by St. Elphege. He says, such a one had never been seen before. It seems to have been a prodigious instrument. It had twelve bellows above, and fourteen below, which were alternately worked by seventy strong men covered with perspiration, and emulously animating each other to impel the blast with all their strength. There were four hundred pipes (musas), which the hand of the skilful organist shut or

Bede also describes the drum, cymbals, and harp: —

"The DRUM is a tense leather, stretched on two cones (metas) joined together by their acute part, which resounds on being struck."

"The CYMBALS are very small vessels composed from mixed metals, which, struck together on the concave side with skilful modulation, give a most acute sound, with delectable coincidence." [13]

"A skilful HARPER, stretching many chords on his harp, tempers them with such sharpness and gravity, that the upper suit the lower in melody. Some having the difference of a semi-tone, some of one tone, some of two tones. Some yield the consonancy diatessaron, others the diapente, others the diapason.

"Having the harp in his hand, arranged with suitable strings (chordis), he stretches some to an acute sound, and others he remits to a graver one. And when he has thus disposed them, applying his fingers, he strikes them in what manner he pleases, so that each adapted to the others yield the consonancy diapason, which consists of eight strings (chordis). The diapente consonancy consists of five chordis, and the diatessaron of four." [14]

Bede also mentions "the minor intervals of the voices, which sound two tones, or one, or a semi-tone; and that the semi-tone was used in the high-sounding as well as the grand-sounding chords." [15] He mentions the organ in another place, with the viola [16] and harp [17], and reasons much on the actions of a bow on a tense string; and he adds these remarks on the effects of music: —

"Among all the sciences this is more commendable, courtly, pleasing, mirthful, and lovely. It makes a man liberal, cheerful, courteous, glad, amiable; it rouses him to battle; it exhorts him to bear fatigue; it comforts him under labour; it refreshes the disturbed mind; it takes away head-aches and sorrow, and dispels the depraved humours and the desponding spirit." [18]

opened as the tune required. Two friars sat at it, whom a rector governed. It had concealed holes adapted to forty tongues, which we may interpret to have been the keys. They struck the seven discrimina vocum, or notes of the octave, the carmine of the lyric semi-tone being mixed. Wolst. Cam. Sæl. Ben. v. p. 631. Dr. Lingard has quoted the whole Latin passage, p. 338. As Wolstan dedicates his poem to St. Elphege, we may accredit the description. It must have reached the full sublime of musical sound, so far as its quantity produces sublimity. But the effect of its diapason and choruses on the ears of the Anglo-Saxons must have been so tremendous, and so like a battle-cannonading, that all melody must have been lost in the overpowering roar within a confining edifice, however spacious.

[13] Bede, Op. vol. viii. p. 1061, 1062.
[14] Ibid. p. 1070.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid. p. 417.
[17] Ibid. p. 408.
[18] Ibid. p. 417, 418.

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In 669, Theodore and Adrian, who planted learning among the Anglo-Saxons, also introduced into Kent the ecclesiastical chanting, which Gregory the Great had much improved. From Kent it was carried into the other English churches. In 678, one John came also from Rome, and taught in his monastery the Roman mode of singing, and was directed by the pope to diffuse it amongst the rest of the clergy, and left written directions to perpetuate it. Under his auspices it became a popular study in the Saxon monasteries. [19]

We have a pleasing proof of the impressive effect of the sacred music of the monks, in the little poem which Canute the Great made upon it. As the monarch, with his queen and courtiers, were approaching Ely, the monks were at their devotions. The king, attracted by the melody, ordered his rowers to approach it, and to move gently while he listened to the sounds which came floating through the air from the church on the high rock before him. He was so delighted by the effect, that he made a poem on the occasion, of which the first stanza only has come down to us. [20]

There are many ancient MSS. of the Anglo-Saxon times, which contain musical notes.

The musical talents of Alfred and Anlaf have been noticed in this history.

Their painting.

The progress of the Anglo-Saxons in the art of design and painting was not very considerable. The talents of their artists varied. The numerous coloured drawings of plants to the Herbarium of Apuleius have merit for the time; but the animals in the same MS. are indifferent.[21] There are also coloured drawings of the things fabled to be in the East, in two MSS. [22] The drawings to Cædmon

[19] See Bede, iv. 2. 18.; v. 22.
[20] See before, p. 249.
[21] Cott. Lib. MSS. Vitel. C. 3.
[22] MS. Tib. B. 5.

show little skill.[23] Many MSS. have the decorations of figures; as the Saxon Calendar, the Gospels, Psalters, and others.[24] The account of the stars, from Cicero's translation of Aratus, contains some very elegant images.[25] A portrait of Dunstan is attempted in one MS.[26] They all exhibit hard outlines.

Rome, the great fountain of literature, art, and science to all the west of Europe, in these barbaric ages, furnished England with her productions in this art. Augustin brought with him from Rome a picture of Christ; and Benedict, in 678, imported from Rome pictures of the Virgin, and of the twelve Apostles, some of the histories in the Evangelists, and some from the subjects in the Apocalypse. These were placed in different parts of the church. In 685 he obtained new supplies of the graphic art. Bede calls them pictures from the Old and New Testament, "executed with wonderful art and wisdom." He mentions four of these, which were believed to have a typical concordance. The picture of Isaac carrying the wood on which he was to be sacrificed, was placed near the representation of Christ carrying his cross. So the Serpent exalted by Moses was approximated to the Crucifixion.[27]

Dunstan excelled in this as in the other arts. He is stated to have diligently cultivated the art of painting, and to have painted for a lady a robe, which she afterwards embroidered.[28] There is a drawing of Christ with himself kneeling at his feet, of his own performance, in the Bodleian Library.[29]

The Anglo-Saxons were fond of beautifying their MSS. with drawings with ink of various colours, coloured parchment, and sometimes with gilt letters.

[23] Cott. MSS.
[24] Ibid.
[25] MS. Cal. A. 7. Tib. B. 5. Nero. D. 4.
[26] MS. Claud. A. 3.
[27] Bede Abb. Wer. 295. 297.
[28] MS. Cleop. B. 13.
[29] Hickes, p. 144.

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The Gospels, Nero, D. 4., exhibit a splendid instance of these ornaments. The Francotheotisc Gospels, Calig. A. 7., are also highly decorated. Many Saxon MSS. in the Cotton Library exhibit very expensive and what in those days were thought beautiful illuminations. The art of doing these ornaments has been long in disuse; but some of the recipes for the materials have been preserved.

They prepared their parchment by this rule:—

"Put it under lime, and let it lie for three days; then stretch it, scrape it well on both sides, and dry it, and then stain it with the colours you wish."[30]

To gild their skins, we have these directions:—

"Take the red skin and carefully pumice it, and temper it in tepid water, and pour the water on it till it runs off limpid. Stretch it afterwards, and smooth it diligently with clean wood. When it is dry, take the white of eggs, and smear it therewith thoroughly; when it is dry, sponge it with water, press it, dry it again, and polish it; then rub it with a clean skin, and polish it again, and gild it."[31]

The receipts for their gold writing have been mentioned in the chapter on their sciences.

Of their sculpture and engraving we know little. Their rings and ornamental horns, and the jewel of Alfred, found in the isle of Athelney[32], show that they had the art of engraving on metals and other substances with much neatness of mechanical execution, though with little taste or design.

Their architecture.

That the Anglo-Saxons had some sort of architecture in use before they invaded Britain cannot be doubted, if we recollect that every other circumstance about them attests that they were by no means in the state of absolute barbarism. They lived in edifices, and worshipped in temples raised by their own skill. The temple which Charlemagne destroyed at Eresberg, in the 8th century, is described in terms

[30] Muratori, t. ii. p. 370.
[31] Ibid. p. 376.
[32] See Hicke's Thesaurus.

which imply, at least, greatness; and if we consult their language, we shall find that they had indigenous expressions concerning their buildings, which is evidence that the things which they designate were in familiar use.[33]

The verb, which they commonly used when they spoke of building, satisfactorily shows us that their ancient erections were of wood. It is getymbrian, "to make of wood." Where Bede says of any one that he built a monastery or a church, Alfred translates it getimbrade. So appropriated was the word to building, that even when they became accustomed to stone edifices, they still retained it, though, when considered as to its original meaning, it then expressed an absurdity; for the Saxon Chronicle says of a person, that he promised to getembrian a church of stone[34], which literally would imply that he made of wood a stone church. Alfred uses it in the same manner.

The first Saxon churches of our island were all built of wood.[35] The first church in Northumbria was built of wood. So the one of Holy Island.[36]

The church of Durham was built of split oak, and covered with reeds like those of the Scots.[37] In Greensted church in Essex, the most ancient part, the nave or body of this church, was entirely composed of the trunks of large oaks split, and rough-hewed on both sides. They were set upright and close to each other, being let into a sill at the bottom, and a plate at the top, where they were fastened with wooden pins. "This," says Ducarel, "was the whole of the original church, which yet remains entire,

[33] Their term for window is rather curious; it is eh-ꝺẏṛl, literally an eye-hole. Dr. Clark says of the poorer sort of Russian towns, "A window in such places is a mark of distinction, and seldom seen. The houses in general have only small holes, through which, as you drive by, you see a head stuck as in a pillory." This description may explain the Saxon "eh-ꝺẏṛl."

[34] Sax. Chron. p. 28.

[35] Bede, iii. 25.

[36] Ibid. 4.

[37] Ibid.

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though much corroded and worn by length of time. It is 29 feet 9 inches long, and 5 feet 6 inches high on the sides, which supported the primitive roof."[38]

Remains of Roman architecture have been found in various parts of England. In Mr. Carter's Ancient Architecture of England, and in the publications of Mr. Lysons, may be seen several fragments of a Roman temple and other buildings lately dug up at Bath and elsewhere; which show that our ancestors, when they settled in England, had very striking specimens of Roman architecture before them, which must have taught them to despise their own rude performances, and to wish to imitate nobler models.

The circles of stones which are found in Cornwall, Oxfordshire, and Derbyshire, as well as the similar ones in Westphalia, Brunswick, and Alsatia, which Keysler mentions[39], show rather the absence than the knowlege of architectural science. They are placed by mere strength, without skill; they prove labour and caprice, but no art.

Stonehenge is certainly a performance which exhibits more workmanship and contrivance. The stones of the first and third circles have tenons which fit to mortises in the stones incumbent. They are also shaped, though into mere simple upright stones, and the circles they describe have considerable regularity. But as it is far more probable that they were raised by the ancient Britons than by Anglo-Saxons, they need not be argued upon here.

If the Roman buildings extant in Britain had been insufficient to improve the taste, and excite the emulation of the Saxons, yet the arrival of the Roman clergy, which occurred in the 7th century, must have contributed to this effect.

It is true, that architecture as well as all the arts

[38] Ducarel's Anglo-Norman Antiquities, p. 100.
[39] Antiq. Septent. p. 5—10.

declined, even at Rome, after the irruption of the barbaric tribes. It is however a just opinion of Muratori[40], that the arts, whose exercise is necessary to life, could never utterly perish. To build houses for domestic convenience, and places, however rude, for religious worship, exacted some contrivance. But there is a great distinction between the edifices of necessity and those of cultivated art. Strong walls, well-covered roofs, and a division of apartments; whatever simple thought, profuse expense, and great labour could produce, appeared in all parts of Europe during the barbarian ages: but symmetry and right disposition of parts, the plans of elegant convenience, of beauty and tasteful ornament, were unknown to both Roman and Saxon architects, from the 6th century to very recent periods.

But if the science and practice of Roman and Grecian architecture declined at Rome, with its political empire, and the erections of barbaric ignorance and barbaric taste appeared instead; the effect, which we are to expect, would result from our ancestors becoming acquainted with the Roman models, was rather a desire for great and striking architecture, than an exact imitation of the beauty they admired. Correct and elegant architecture requires that the mind of the designer and superintendent should be cultivated with a peculiar degree of geometrical science and general taste. Masons capable of executing whatever genius may conceive, are not alone sufficient. Of these there must have been no want, in the most barbarous ages of Europe. They who could raise the stupendous monasteries and cathedrals which we read of or have seen, could have equally reared the more elegant buildings of ancient art, if an architect had existed who could have given their

[40] De Art. Ital. t. ii. p. 353.

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labour and ingenuity the requisite direction. A Wren, or a Vitruvius, was wanted, not able workmen. The disciplined mind and cultured taste, not the manual dexterity.

The arts of life are found to flourish in proportion as their productions are valued and required. When the Anglo-Saxons became converted to Christianity, they wanted monasteries and churches. And this demand for architectural ability would have produced great perfection in the art, if the state of the other arts and sciences had permitted a due cultivation of genius in this; but no single art can attain perfection if every other be neglected, or if general ignorance enfeeble and darken the mind. Patronage, therefore, though it called forth whatever mechanical labour and unlettered mind could fabricate, could not miraculously create taste and regular science. The love of sublimity is more congenial to the rude heroism of infant civilisation, and therefore our ancient architecture often reached to the sublime; but while we admire its vastness, its solidity, and its magnificence we smile at its irregularities, its discordancies, and its caprice.

The chief peculiarities of the Anglo-Saxon architecture, of which several specimens, though in fragments, exist, are declared to be a want of uniformity of parts, massy columns, semi-circular arches, and diagonal mouldings.[41] Of these the two first are common to all the barbaric architecture of Europe. But the semi-circular arches and diagonal mouldings seem to have been more peculiar additions to the Saxon building.

That the round arches were borrowed from Roman buildings, is the prevailing sentiment. It is at least a fact, that the Saxons must have seen them among

[41] See Carter's Ancient Architecture.

the numerous specimens of the imperial architecture which they found in England.

The universal diagonal ornament, or zig-zag moulding, which is a very distinguishing trait of the Saxon architecture, is found disposed in two ways; one with its point projecting outwards, and the other with its point lying so as to follow the lines which circumscribe it, either horizontal, perpendicular, or circular.[42]

On this singular ornament an etymological remark may be hazarded, as it may tend to elucidate its origin. The Saxon word used to denote the adorning of a building is gefrætwian, or frætwan; and an ornament is frætew; but frætan signifies to gnaw or to eat; and upon our recollecting that the diagonal ornament of Saxon building is an exact imitation of teeth, we can hardly refrain from supposing that the ornament was an intended imitation of teeth. Frætew and frætwung, which they used to signify ornament, may be construed fret-work, or teeth-work. The teeth which the Saxon diagonals represent, are, I believe, marine teeth. If so, perhaps they arose from the stringing of teeth of the large sea animals.

We will mention a few of the ancient Saxon buildings we meet with, and show how they are described.

In 627, Paulinus built the first Christian church, in Northumbria, of wood; it was afterwards rebuilt on a larger scale, and with stone: he also built a stone church at Lincoln. His church at York was not very skilfully erected: for in less than a century afterwards, Wilfrid found its stony offices half destroyed; its roof was permeable to moisture. It had windows of fine linen cloth, or latticed wood-work; but no glazed casements, and therefore the birds flew in and out, and made nests in it.[43] So Bede says of his church at Lincoln, that though the walls were standing, the roof had fallen down.[44]

In 676, Benedict sought cementarios, or masons, to make a church in the Roman manner, which he loved. But the Roman

[42] See Carter's Ancient Architecture, p. 15.
[43] Malmsb. 149. [44] Bede, ii. 16.

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manner seems not to express the Roman science and taste, but rather a work of stone, and of the large size which the Romans used. It was finished in a year after its foundation.[45]

At this period, glass-makers were not known among the Saxons. But Benedict had heard of them, and he sent to Gaul for some, to make latticed windows to the porticoes and cænaculum of the church. From those whom he employed, the Saxons learned the art.[46]

In the 7th century, Cuthbert built a monastery, which is described. From wall to wall it was of four or five perches. The outside was higher than a standing man. The wall was not made of cut stone, or bricks and cement, but of unpolished stones and turf, which they had dug from the spot. Some of the stones four men could hardly lift. The roofs were made of wood and clay.[47]

As their architectural practice improved, they chose better materials. Thus Firman took from the church at Durham its thatched roof, and covered it with plates of lead.[48]

About 709, Wilfrid flourished. He, like many others, had travelled to Rome, and of course beheld the most valuable specimens of ancient art. He brought thence some masons and artificers.[49] Though he could not imitate these, he sought to improve the efforts of his countrymen. The church of Paulinus, at York, he completely repaired. He covered the roof with pure lead, he washed its walls from their dirt, and by glass windows (to use the words of my author) he kept out the birds and rain, and yet admitted light.

At Ripon, he also erected a church with polished stone, adorned with various columns and porticoes. At Hexham, he made a similar building. It was founded deep, and made of polished stones, with many columns and porticoes, adorned with great length and height of walls. It had many windings, both above and below, carried spirally round. It was superior to any edifice on this side of the Alps. In the inside was a stony pavement, on which a workman fell from a scaffold of enormous height.[50]

In 716, we read of Croyland monastery. The marshy ground would not sustain a stony mass. The king, therefore, had a vast number of piles of oak and alders fixed in the ground, and earth was brought in boats, nine miles off, to be mingled with the timber and the marsh, to complete the foundation.[51]

In 969, a church was built. The preceding winter was employed in preparing the iron and wooden instruments, and all other necessaries. The most skilful artificers were then brought. The length and breadth of the church were measured out, deep foundations were laid on account of the neighbouring moisture, and they were strengthened by frequent percussions of the rams. While some workmen carried stones, others made cement, and others raised both aloft by a machine, with a wheel. Two towers,

[45] Bede, p. 295. [46] Ibid. p. 295. [47] Ibid. p. 243.
[48] Ibid. p. 25. [49] Malmsb. lib. iii.
[50] Eddius, Vita Wilfridi, 59—63. [51] Ingulf. p. 4.

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with their tops, soon rose, of which the smaller was visible on the west, in the front of the church. The larger in the middle, with four spires, pressed on four columns, connected together by arches passing from one to the other, that they might not separate.[52]

It is supposed that many specimens of ancient Saxon architecture yet remain; as part of St. Peter's at Oxford, part of St. Alban's abbey church, Tickencote church, near Stamford, in Lincolnshire, the porch on the south side of Shireburn minster, Barfreston church, in Kent, Iffley church, and some others. But the works and delineations of professional men must be consulted on this subject.

[52] Gale, iii. 399.

# BOOK X.

*Their* RELIGION.

## CHAP. I.

*Utility and Decline of Saxon Paganism, and the Introduction of Christianity among the* ANGLO-SAXONS. — *Its general Effect.* — *Religious Passages in the Welsh Bards.*

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THE religion of the Saxons, while on the Continent, has been delineated in the Appendix to the first volume of this history. With that martial superstition they came into Britain. They found the island in a peculiar state on this impressive subject. In many towns and stations, they met with tomb-stones, altars, and other lapidary inscriptions; images, temples, and public works dedicated to several of the imaginary deities, which Rome, in her paganism, and her allies, had worshipped. The majority of the Britons were professing Christianity, and had sent bishops to the councils on the Continent. But the Druidism which yet had its regular temples in Bretagne, was lingering in some corners of the island, and was still, by its traditions and mysticisms, materially affecting the minds of the Britsh bards of that period. Many of the remaining poems of Taliesin, and some passages in those of Llywarch Hen, show that mixture of the ancient Druidical feeling with their Christian faith, which evinces that their minds were a confused medley of opinions and sentiments from both sources, and therefore too fantastic to benefit or interest their Saxon conquerors, or to care for their improvement. The British clergy, as drawn by one of themselves,

at that time, were by their vices, ignorance, and profligacy, still less qualified than the bards to impress the fierce descendants of Odin with either the morals or the belief of Christianity.

When we observe the many forms of idolatrous superstitions that have governed and still interest the human mind in so many parts, and for so many ages, and reflect on the vast reasoning powers of man, and on the highly-gifted individuals who have believed and supported such errors and absurdities, we are astonished at their predominance. But the fact of their long prevalence is evidence that they must be connected with some of the natural tendencies of the human mind, and with some of the circumstances of ancient society, and will induce the unprejudiced philosopher to hope that their long-continuing errors have not been altogether unuseful.

We may refer the rise and diffusion of the various systems to many causes. Accident, caprice, reasoning, imagination, policy, hope, fear, and the love of agitation and enjoyment, have suggested many rites and notions. Vanity, enthusiasm, craft, and selfishness, have given rise to others. But, perhaps, the desire of the human heart to have deities like itself, and as little above human nature as possible, — and its shrinking from a holy, just, all-knowing, and perfect God, — and its aversion to have any moral governor and legislator, principally led mankind to all their ancient polytheism. Yet the feelings of the sincere votaries, even of idolatry, have been always natural, and, though often gross and ignorant, usually well-intentioned. The dread of evil, and the expectation of averting it; gratitude for good enjoyed, anxiety at the vicissitudes of life, and the desire of a protector; grief under poignant sorrow, and the heart's craving for a comforter; regret for faults committed; a sense of imperfection and unworthi-

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ness; an awful impression of the majesty, as well as the power of the invisible Deity; the wish for an intercessor; the bitterness of disappointment, and the sentiment of the ultimate insufficiency of the riches, pleasures, and ambition of life to satisfy the mature and experienced mind;—these feelings have, in all times and places, concurred with other impressions to lead mankind to adopt with eagerness whatever system of deprecation, adoration, expiation, reconcilement, and supplication was most accessible, most habitual, or most recommended to their attention. It is upon their feelings, rather than upon their reason, that mankind base their belief, not in religion alone, but in all things which they accredit or uphold; and belief will be always greatly coloured by the fancies, state of knowlege, exigencies, cultivation, and customs of the day.

No paganism could, according to the nature of things, have subsisted long, or would have been permitted to subsist, unless some temporary utility had accompanied it. The religion of every country being the creature, or the adoption, of its feelings and intellect, must correspond with their state and tendencies. It must partake of their imperfections, and improve as they do. But all forms of paganism, though frequently at variance with morality, are yet the antagonists of atheism, and of its counterpart, a disbelief of the moral government of the Deity. Although paganism attaches the feelings and opinions to imaginary beings, yet it preserves, in the general mind, the impression of a Divine power and providence, interested by human conduct, and superintending human concerns; commanding nature, punishing crimes, imposing precepts; irresistible yet placable; and on whose distribution all the good and evil of life continually depend. It fills nature with Deity, though it combines it with phantoms of its perverted

imagination. It is undoubtedly true that the greatest mistakes of reasoning and conduct have been connected with idolatry and polytheism. But, with all these evils, they have kept both the uncultivated and refined mind of the world from surrendering the command of its energies and feelings to the government of atheism; and thus have preserved society from that dreadful state of selfishness, bloodshed, violence, and profligacy, which must have resulted if universal disbelief of a creating and presiding Deity had pervaded it; and which, as far as reasoning can extend its foresight, must accompany the universal diffusion of a system so disconsolatory.

But, independently of this general benefit, almost every system of paganism, if closely examined, will be found to contain some valuable principles or feelings that half redeem its follies. The lofty theism, and sublime, though wild, traditions of the Northmen we have already noticed from their Voluspa and Edda. It is most probable that in these we read the sentiments of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers. It would indeed seem that both the British Druids and the Saxon Pagans had as high a sense of the Supreme Deity as several of the Orphic verses show to have existed in some of the minds of Ancient Greece. I infer this, as to the Britons, from the remarkable circumstance that the most ancient British bards, and those of the middle ages, whatever be the subject of their poems, made it their usual custom to begin them with an address to the Deity, or to insert some expressions of veneration to him, containing not only ideas derived from Christianity, but often others that are more referable to the notions of their Druidical ancestors.[1] In the Saxon poems that remain, we

[1] The poems of Taliesin, Meilyr, Gwalchmai, Meilyr and Einion his sons, Cynddelw, Llywarch ap Moch, Casnodyn, Dafydd y Coed, Griffith ab Maredwg, and others,

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find, in the same spirit, many metaphors and much periphrasis on the Deity, which seem to be the effu-

abound with instances of this poetical piety, of which the following are given as specimens: —

TALIESIN.

Sovereign of heaven and of every region!
We knew not
Who thou wert.

To God the Defyer:
To God the Regulator:
The prophet of Mercy!
The Great; the Wonderful; —
When thou gavest protection
Thro' the waves
To the path of Moses,
Sovereign principle of all movement,
Thine is the country of heaven,
To thee it belongs,
Thine is the peace of heaven.
To thee
There is neither covering
Nor want
In thy region, O Regulator!
Nothing can be made,
Nothing can be separated,
Nothing can be protected
But by him.

Great was his atonement
And thy liberality
And mercy.
Lord of the tribute of the world!
May we also be
Received together
In the cities of the heavens.

No one can be enriched
Without the power of the Trinity.

I will praise the Fountain of Love;
The Lord of every nation,
The Sovereign of hosts and of energies
Around the universe.

TALHAIARN.

O God! Grant me protection! and with thy protection, strength; and with strength, discretion; and with discretion, integrity; and with integrity, love; and in love, to love thee, oh my God: and loving thee, to be affectionate to every thing.

MEILYR.

The King of kings!
It shall be pre-eminently my duty
Freely to praise Him.
To my loftiest Lord,
I will lift up my prayer.

Sovereign of the region of necessity!
Of the exalted circle of felicity!
Excelling one!
Make a reconciliation
Between me and thee.

The re-echoing groan returns
At the memory how thou wast insulted
For me.
But may my penitence be effectual,
Thou hast satisfied punishment
In the presence of God, the Creator;
My atonement! but my prayer
Is without service.

Yet I will serve thee,
O my eternal King!
Ere I vanish from my earthly frame,
A prophecy of truth
Toward Adam and his offspring
The prophets predicted;

The existence of Jesus
In the womb of Martyrdom!
That the good Mary
Should carry the embrio burthen.
I have heaped up to excess
A burthen of sins.
I am in tumult!
I have been greatly agitated
By their conflicts.

Sovereign of all Life!
How good to those who worship thee!
I will worship thee.
May I become completely purified
Before I am punished.
The King of every dominion,
He knows me;
He will not refuse me:
He will have mercy
On my evil deeds.

Often have I obtained

sions of their more ancient feelings; and fragments, or mutations, of some part of their pagan hymns.

Gold and velvet from frail chiefs
For loving them,
But after the gift of the muse
It is now otherwise.
Poor is now my tongue,
In its silence.

I, Meilyr, the poet,
Am a Pilgrim to Peter.
To a Porter who regulates
All qualities appropriately.

The time will be
The appointed season of resurrection
To all that are in the grave.
I foresee it.
Tho' I shall be in my dwelling
Awaiting the call,
The Goal is secure,
There, I shall be preserved.

My rest shall be in a solitude
Not won by the traveller.
The bosom of the briny sea
Shall be around my sepulchre,
In the pleasing island of Mary,
The holy island of the pure:
The image of our rising up
Is beautiful in her.

Christ, whose cross was predicted
Will there know me;
Will there guard me
From the uproar of hell;
The abode of the separated.
The Creator who formed me
Will admit me
Among the holy society
Of the community of Enlli.

GWALCHMAI.

To us there is a Physician
Who can deliver us from falsehood.
Let us place then upon Him our dependence.
It is the Lord of heaven
Who hath the power
To free us from vice even after its extremity.

EINION AB GWALCHMAI.

By conquering reconciliation for my errors,
Before I am in my sepulchral course
Among the graves,
Before the period of the bitter tales approaches,
Before the sighing for my sins returns upon me,
God in his kind love
Will preserve me in the cities of heaven,
God will hear my voice;
For my thoughts ascend to Him.

MEILYR, SON OF GWALCHMAI.

May the Supreme not leave me
With the forsaken part!
The Deity gave us our beginning
In the delicious circle of paradise,
In light never ceasing.
He caused us peculiarly to exist
Without any wants.
The Transcendant Eternal!
Thy government is our refuge.
Lord of all wealth! Light of the world!
Creator of the heavens!
Grant me strength from thee,
Rewarder of all!
To behold the banquet
Of the bliss of our renovation.

The best state of protection, of glorious support,
Is to deserve a recompence by meditating on him.
For the value thou hast given me,
Hearken! O mortal man,
I give thee counsel free from malice.
When God shall please
To divest thee of thy present form,
And from the dwelling of dread
May the gift of his treasures of light be upon thee.

O loftiest First Principle!
Thy government is my refuge,
Lord of all wealth!
Luminary of the world!
Grant me,
Creator of heaven,
Strength from thee,
That in due time I may behold
Thy banquet of felicity without end.

May I attain thy sacred rest,
O holy King of Saints,
In thy kingdom of glory.
Sovereign of heaven and earth!
And of the great universe!
Benign Lord
Of the radiating emanation!

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But all the religious systems of the ancient pagan world were naturally perishable, from the quantity of

The king of pure intellect and of the stars,
May he endow me with sense.

GRIFFITH AB MAREDWG.

Hear me,
My self-exciting Lord!
Who sittest above the stars!
Hear in thy heaven,
Protector of the system of the course
Of the region of felicity,
Convert me from my falling state
To thy eternity.
Thou art our hope,
O Son of Mary!
Dispenser of happiness!
Teacher of our joy!
Our gracious Creator!

I will fix my home;
I will prepare for the paths of light,
By adoring my sovereign Lord
As long as I exist.

Intercede for us!
O make us perfect,
Triune Deity!
O Lord!
Hearken to my prayer!

Lord of the course of the wind
And the wild torrents of the sea!
Great is Thy grace;
Great are Thy wonders.

LLYWARCH PRYDYDD AP MOCH.

May I not totally lose God
From the impulse of the world!
He has not entirely lost heaven
Who is not insane.
Mighty Leader!
Most royally supreme!
The Governor of the blissful mansions of heaven!
I implore strength from thee,
The prosperity of every kindred!
I love to praise thee,
Greatly splendid, mysterious One!
O Sovereign most benign!

O Christ! the Creator!
The Governor of the host of earth
And also of heaven!
Protect me from sorrow.
Christ! thou mysterious One,
May I be retired and gentle
Before
O Son of Mary!
Prepare for me from the four elements,
A genius penetrating and undaunted,
O Son of God!

Christ the Creator,
Self-causer of motion!
Mysterious One!
Thou column of tranquillity!
O Son of Mary!
Prepare for me
A pure fountain of intellect
Before iniquity affects it.

CYNZELW.

May the Deity conduct me
For my proportioned honor
To his blissful kingdom,
To his grace, to his own dominion.

DAFYDD Y COED.

Jesus
The earth-born King!
The mysterious One!
The fountain of love!
The faithful! The great!
Emperor of sea and land!
May I obtain heaven.
That seat of all tranquillity.

CASNODYN.

The God of mystery is Three!
The column of emanations;
Thro' his grace,
And the benign One
The subject of our song!
Surpassing in power is He
The Father of heaven!
Lord of the glorious attributes
Above all the creatures
Of most excelling virtues!
O Regulator!
Perfect organizer of the sun and moon!
Thou didst arrange and form
In thine enlarged purpose
The finely connected powers
Of the lips that sing.

Thousands in concert
Are uttering thy praise.
Thou hast arranged the stars,
And the seas of fluctuating tides.
Thou hast arranged the mighty earth,
With its surface, all complete
Thou rulest the swamps of hell
And the disposition of Satan.

false opinions, and vicious habits and ceremonies and bad morals that were attached to them. Human judgment may, for a time, be deceived, corrupted, or overpowered; but its tendency to right action is so strong, and so indestructible, that no error can be permanent. The reign of what is untrue or unjust may be longer or shorter, according to the pressure of incumbent circumstances; but the mind is always struggling to attain every attainable good, and therefore to appropriate to itself every new truth that becomes visible. Hence, as we have before remarked, it had begun to discern the imperfections of its Saxon paganism before Christianity came within its reach; and as soon as this new system was presented fully to its contemplation, the Anglo-Saxon mind discerned its superiority, and was not unduly tardy in adopting it. It was impossible for Christianity to be presented to the world, and for idolatry to exist in credit against it. Hence polytheism fell in Greece and Rome, as it is now declining in India and the South Sea Islands.

It has been remarked of the Christian religion, that it neither arose from ambition, nor was propagated by the sword. It appealed unoffendingly to the reason, the sensibility, the virtue, and the interest of mankind, and, in opposition to all that was venerated or disputed, maintained by power, or believed by the populace, it peaceably established itself in every province of the Roman empire; as, by the same means, it is now penetrating every region of the globe.

Among the Anglo-Saxons, its conquest over the fierce paganism which our ancestors upheld, was not begun till both Ireland and France had submitted to her laws; but it was accomplished in a manner worthy of its benevolence and purity, as we have already detailed in the reigns of Ethelbert and Edwin.

Genuine piety led the first missionaries to our shores. Their zeal, their perseverance, and the ex-

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cellence of the system they diffused, notwithstanding some peculiarities which, in conformity with their own taste, and with that of their age, they attached to it, made their labour successful.

How long the Saxon paganism continued among individuals in each district, after it ceased to be the religious establishment of the government, there are no materials for ascertaining. It was too irrational to have maintained a protracted contest with Christianity; but though it may have ceased to have had its temples and priests, or any visible existence, yet the influence of its prejudices, and of the habits it had generated, continued long to operate. These became insensibly mixed with so much of Christianity as each understood, and produced that motley character in religion and morals, which was so often displayed in the Anglo-Saxon period.

But Christianity was a positive benefit to the nation, in every degree of its prevalence. Wherever it has penetrated, like the Guardian Angel of the human race, it has meliorated the heart and enlightened the understanding; and hence has become the religion of the most cultivated portions of the globe.

Every part of its moral system is directed to soften the asperities of the human character, to remove its selfishness, to intellectualise its sensualities, to restrain its malignity, and to animate its virtues. If it did not eradicate all the vices of the Anglo-Saxon by whom it was professed, it taught him to abandon many. It exhibited to his contemplation the idea of what human nature ought to be, and may attain. It gradually implanted a moral sense in his bosom, and taught his mind the habit of moral reasoning; and its application to life. It could not be known unless some portion of literature was attained or diffused. It, therefore, actually introduced learning into England, and taught the Anglo-Saxons to cultivate intellectual pursuits.

On the enslaved poor of the country its effects were most benign. It was always contributing to their emancipation, by urging their lords to grant this blessing as an act beneficial to their state after death; and while slavery continued in the country, the master was humanised, and the bondmen consoled, wherever Christianity was admitted and obeyed.

The effects of Christianity, in diminishing the superstitions of the day, were also considerable. The credulous fancies of an unlettered people are very gross, and usually hold the understanding in chains, from which it is difficult to emerge. The conversion of the nation destroyed this brutish slavery, and greatly strengthened and enlarged its general intellect. Monkish superstitions introduced other follies; but the literature which accompanied them dispelled them as it spread, and reason in every age gained new conquests, which she never lost. Indeed, in nothing was the new religion more strikingly beneficial, than by introducing a moral and intellectual education. This could have neither been known or understood till Christianity displayed the value, imparted the means, and produced the habit of adopting it.

The political effects of Christianity in England were as good as they could be in that age of general darkness; but it must be confessed that they were not so beneficial as its individual influence; and yet we are indebted to it for chivalry, and for the high-minded tone of spirit and character which that produced. We owe to its professors all the improvement that we have derived from the civil law, which they discovered, revived, explained, and patronized. Nor has Christianity been unserviceable to our constitutional liberty: every battle which the churchman fought against the king or noble, was for the advantage of general freedom; and by rearing an eccle-

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siastical power, which at one time opposed the king, and at another the aristocracy of the chiefs, it certainly favoured the rise of the political importance and influence of the middle and lower classes of the people. The independence, and even the ambition, of the church, could not be asserted without checking the royal power; and such opposition repeatedly compelled the crown to court popularity as its surest defence.

The defects which often accompanied these benefits, were the faults of a very partially enlightened age; of tempers sometimes sincerely zealous, and sometimes ambitiously selfish, but always violent and irascible; and of the system into which Christianity was distorted. They did not spring from the religion inculcated by the Scriptures. Monkish and papal Christianity became, in every age after the seventh, something different from Apostolical Christianity. Religion is enjoined by its Divine Author to be made the governing principle of life, but its true spirit and utility declines or disappears, when superstition, imposture, politics, folly, or violence is combined with it. Formed to suit, to influence, and to adorn every class of society, true piety mixes gracefully with every innocent pleasure which virtue sanctions; with every accomplishment which refined intellect values; and with all that business which life requires, and which enlightened prudence would cultivate. It forbids only, in every pursuit, that monopolising absorption of mind which cannot be indulged without debasing ourselves or injuring others. It aims to form us to a species of celestial intellect, and celestial sensibility. Its true offspring is not the gloomy ascetic fasting into atrophy in the solitude of a desert; nor the self-tormenting monk mortifying himself into imbecility, and mistaking delirium for inspiration. Its object is to lead us to a gradual approximation

towards the Divine perfections; and its tuition for this purpose is that of parental tenderness and affectionate wisdom, imposing no restraints but such as accelerate our improvements; and distressing us with no vicissitudes but those which tend to make our happiness compatible with our virtue, and to render human life a series of continual progression. Inattentive to these great objects of the Christian Legislator, the papal hierarchy, though often producing men of the holiest lives and of the most spiritual devotion, yet has, from accident, fanaticism, and policy, pursued too often a spurious plan of forcing mankind to become technical automatons of rites and dreams; words and superstitions; and has supported a system which, if not originally framed, was at least applied to enforce a long-continued exertion of transferring the government of the world into the hands of ecclesiastics, and too often superseding the Christianity of the Gospels by that of tradition, policy, half delirious bigotry, feelings often fantastic, and unenlightened enthusiasm. These errors could not always suppress the noble aspirations of devout sensibility which were sometimes combined with them. But the mischievous additions usually formed the prevailing character of the multitude.[2]

[2] The following table has been published as a conjectural, but probable representation of the progressive increase of the number of Christians in the world: —

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st century, | 500,000 | 10th century, | 50,000,000 |
| 2d | 2,000,000 | 11th | 70,000,000 |
| 3d | 5,000,000 | 12th | 80,0000,00 |
| 4th | 10,000,000 | 13th | 75,000,000 |
| 5th | 15,000,000 | 14th | 80,000,000 |
| 6th | 20,000,000 | 15th | 100,000,000 |
| 7th | 25,000,000 | 16th | 125,000,000 |
| 8th | 30,000,000 | 17th | 155,000,000 |
| 9th | 40,000,000 | 18th | 200,000,000 |

Ferussac. Bull. Univ. Geog. p. 4. Jan. 1827.

But I think in this 19th century, the real number of the Christian population of the world, is nearer to 300,000,000, and is visibly much increasing, from the missionary spirit and exertions which are now distinguishing the chief Protestant nations in the world. The Jews, from the numbers which I have observed in every part of the globe, are between 6 and 8,000,000: the Mahometans not above 80,000,000; and the Pagans in the four quarters of the earth do not exceed 600,000,000.

## CHAP. II.

### ANGLO-SAXONS *become Missionaries to other Nations.*

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Their conversion of other nations.

SOON after the Anglo-Saxons had been converted to Christianity, they became anxious to spread its consolations among their continental ancestors, and the neighbouring nations.

Willebrod, with eleven of his companions, went as missionaries from England to Heligoland and Friesland in 692; and was made bishop of the city now called Utrecht. His associates spread Christianity among the Westphalians and their neighbours.[1] Boniface, in 715, left our island to convert the Germans: he preached to the Thuringians, Hessians, and others. He founded the bishoprics of Wurtzburg, Bamburg, Erfurt, and Erchstadt. In 744 he raised the celebrated monastery of Fulda; and in 746, was made archbishop of Mentz. Returning to Friesland, in 755, he was there murdered, with fifty ecclesiastics who accompanied him. He had converted above one hundred thousand Germans.[2] Lebuin was another Englishman who attempted to become a missionary; and Adalbert, son of a king of the Northumbrian kingdom of Deiri, in 790, went to Germany for the same purpose.[3]

We have an intimation of the plan of instruction which they adopted for the change of the pagan mind,

[1] Alcuin, Vita Willeb.

[2] See his Letters. 15 Bib. Mag. Pat.; and see Mosheim. Eccl. Hist. cent. 8.

[3] Tanner, Not. Mon. 4. Ireland was also successful in its missionary exertions. Its Columbanus taught in Gaul, and among the Suevi and Boioi; one of his companions, St. Gall, converted many of the Helvetii and Suevi; and St. Kilian visited the Eastern Franks.

in the following judicious directions of Alcuin for a progressive information:—

"This order should be pursued in teaching mature persons: 1st. They should be instructed in the immortality of the soul; in the future life; in its retribution of good and evil, and in the eternal duration of both conditions.

"2d. They should then be informed for what sins and crimes they will have to suffer with the Devil everlasting punishments; and for what good and beneficial deeds they will enjoy unceasing glory with Christ.

"3d. The faith of the Holy Trinity is then to be most diligently taught: and the coming of our Saviour into the world for the salvation of the human race. Afterwards impress the mystery of His passion; the truth of His resurrection; His glorious ascension; His future advent to judge all nations, and the resurrection of our bodies.

"Thus prepared and strengthened, the man may be baptized."[4]

[4] Alc. Op. p. 1484.

## CHAP. III.

*View of the Form of Christianity introduced among the* Anglo-Saxons ; *and of some of the Religious Rites and Notions.*

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The form and spirit of Christianity introduced among the Anglo-Saxons by Gregory's monks were unquestionably the best which he and the Roman Church then knew and valued. And as the form and spirit of every institution arise from the mind and disposition of some portion of its contemporaries, and are adapted to their feelings or occasions, so we may assume that the doctrines, rites, and formulæ of Christianity, which the papal see established in England in the seventh century, were congenial with the mind, character, taste, and circumstances of the nation, and of Europe at that period. It is therefore no reproach to the memory of Gregory or of his missionaries, if we now appreciate differently the merit of what they taught with the most benevolent integrity and with merited success. The world has become a new world of knowlege, feeling, taste, habit, and reason since that period. Their religious education suited their comparative babyhood of knowlege and intellect, and formed an interesting and improving child. New agencies occurred afterwards to rear this infant to a noble youth. Better views of religion have since united with expanded science and progressive reason to conduct the national character and mind to a still superior manhood. Each preceding stage was necessary to the formation of the subsequent. Each has produced its appropriate utilities, and each has passed away from our estimation as

soon as higher degrees of improvement were attained, and better systems became visible. The Scriptures are the imperishable records of our faith and hope: and if their lessons only had been allowed to be the guides of man's opinions and practice, all the absurdities and superstitions which we lament or ridicule would have been prevented, or soon removed. But in every age the human mind has chosen to blend religion with its own dreams and passions; and has made these, and not the Gospel, the paramount, though always erring, dictators of our theological knowlege and religious sensibility. It is the glory of the present age, that the cultivated understanding is emancipating itself from all the dogmatism and prejudices both of scepticism and superstition, and is advancing to those just and clear views of impartial truth, of human weakness, and of the need and efficacy of divine assistance, which will unite faith with philosophy, knowlege with hope, divine love with moral beauty, and self-comfort with an active, kind, and magnanimous charity.

With these views we may smile without insult at some of the questions, and condemn without bitterness others, on which Augustine requests the directions of Gregory, as to the ecclesiastical government, discipline, rules, and restrictions, to which he is to subject his new converts. We are surprised that some of the points adverted to should have been made the subjects of sacerdotal notice; but the gravity and earnestness with which they are put and answered, show that they were then deemed proper objects of such attention, and were considered by priest and votary to be important and interesting to the consciences of both.[1]

[1] See Bede's 27th chapter of his first book, of which the eighth and ninth articles are the most objectionable. But there is a liberality in the pope's answer to the second question that deserves notice. "You know the custom of the Roman church, in which you remember you was brought up. But I am willing, if you

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The detail of all the ecclesiastical rites and notions of the Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastics would be tedious and unimproving in a general history. They have been discussed and disputed professionally by some, and as matters of antiquarian curiosity by others. The present chapter will be limited to the selection of a few points, on which some original information can be given, and which may be more interesting to the philosophical reader.

Among the religious institutions of the Anglo-Saxons, their monastic establishments attained a great though fluctuating popularity. In the first period of their Christianity, when a general ardour of belief impelled those who sincerely embraced it, several kings and nobles withdrew from the business and vexations of the world to enjoy the devout serenity of the cloister. Such a taste has been too hastily censured as a mental imbecility. The system of monasteries, though pernicious when abused, and defective in its intellectual regulations, yet contained much that was fairly interesting both to the imagination and the heart of the Anglo-Saxons, and that actually contributed to increase the happiness of life in their day. Even now, in the opinion of many thinking men, if they were confined to the middle and declining periods of life ; if they were frequented by those only, who, after having discharged all their

have found any thing in the Roman or Gallican, or in any other church, which will be more pleasing to the Almighty, that you carefully select it; and infuse into the English church, which is yet new in the faith, in its leading institution, those things which you may have collected from many churches. Things are not to be loved for places, but places for good things. Choose then from every church whatever things are pious, religious, and right, and, collecting them as into a bundle, place them as a habit in the minds of the English." Bede, lib. i. c. 27. If the papal see had continued to act on this wise rule, as society advanced, it would have improved with every succeeding age, and have still held the dominion of the religious world. But it ever afterwards deviated into a narrow, peculiar, selfish, and unchangeable system, that has become in every following generation more incompatible with the human progress; and thus it has irretrievably lost the government of the intellectual world. A new and wiser system, that has yet to receive its being, can alone obtain that universal sceptre to which both ancient and modern Rome so long aspired, and for a brief interval attained.

social duties, desired to withdraw from the occupations, troubles, and fascinations of the world, to a halcyon calm of mind, uninterrupted study, tranquil meditation, or devotional sensibility; if they were not shackled by indissoluble vows of continuance, imprisoning the repining; if they were made seminaries of education, and allowed to be temporary asylums of unprovided youth; and if their rules and habits were framed on such moral plans and religious formulæ as should be found worthy of an intellectual age, which seeks to combine the fancy and the feeling in a sweet harmony with its knowlege and its reason: thus formed and directed, such institutions might again contribute to the happiness of the aged, the destitute, the sorrowful, the lonely, the abstracted, the studious, the pensive, the unambitious, the embarrassed, and the devout, as well as to the instruction of the young, the relief of the poor, and the revival of religious sensibility in the community at large. The spiritual piety of the more fervent sympathies had the advantage of these asylums under the catholic institutions.

But when monasteries were founded among the Anglo-Saxons, mankind had not attained or noticed the experience of all their effects; and the visible good which they achieved prevented their evils from being felt; or if they were discerned, no better means then occurred of acquiring elsewhere their manifest advantages. Our ancestors did not perceive that they were opposed to the social duties and general improvement of mankind, by admitting the young and active; by compelling the self-sacrifice to last for life; by a series of religious ordinances that became mechanical rote; by a slavish discipline and unimproving habits; by their discouragement of liberal feelings and of an enlarged cultivation of the intellect; and by legends, bigotry, superstitious

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tenets and prejudices, which as much poisoned the mind, as the increasing corruptions and ambition which they fed and fomented deteriorated the conduct. Of these ill effects, many were the growth of time, others of ignorance, and some of the circumstances in which former ages had been involved. But as they began the mental and moral education of the country, and carried it on successfully to a certain point; as they fostered and diffused that religious spirit, without which, as without them, the Anglo-Saxons would not have long retained their Christianity; and as they made the hierarchy a stronger bulwark against the violence of the great at one time, and the oppressions of the throne at another; these establishments were for a long time of incalculable utility. Having become incompatible with the improved reason, new state, and present duties of mankind, the downfall of their ancient system in the present age was as necessary as their elevation had been expedient. To suit the present wants and progress of society, they must, if ever introduced again, be entirely new-created; and upon a wiser plan, and under an intelligent and benevolent administration, they would be the retreat of serene happiness to many.

The monastic scheme which the Anglo-Saxons adopted was that of St. Benedict; and it is impossible to read his rule without perceiving that it was the product of a mind aiming to do what seemed wisest and best. For above a century the Anglo-Saxons warmly patronised monasteries; but the industry of their fraternities so much improved their possessions, that they tempted the avarice, not only of the less religious great, but of the other dignitaries of the church; and I have found among the works of our venerable Bede this complaint of their spoliation and decay in his time:—

"The possessions of monasteries were given to the monks, that they and their servitors, and the poor and strangers who may arrive, should be nourished thereout. This care belongs to all Christians; but, I grieve to say it, nothing is more difficult to be believed, as well by the clergy as by laics, than that it is a sin to plunder the possessions of the monasteries and to alienate them.—Attend, I beseech you, O rulers! Be exhorted to restore the destroyed monasteries: first, that the spoilers may return to the monks the property taken from them; then, that they who fear God and walk in his ways may be preferred to those who do not; for God is greatly offended, that those places which were emancipated and consecrated to him, and his saints, should be destroyed from the carelessness of the governors. If those serving God in monasteries had whatever was necessary to them, they could pursue their divine duties with more alacrity; they could more devoutly intercede for the king, for the safety of the bishops and princes, and for all the church. But all these things are treated with such neglect by most bishops, that if a pure prayer, or rebuke, or seasonable admonition should be necessary, they disdain to notice it: caring only that pleasing and assiduous duties be done to themselves.

"It is to be much lamented, that since the lands which were formerly delivered to monasteries by religious princes are now taken away by kings or bishops, no alms can be given there, and no guest or stranger refreshed.

"If they find monasteries destroyed by neglect of their spiritual or corporal provisions, they not only take no care to meliorate them, but even encourage the destruction."[2]

Alcuin has a passage which intimates the same decline.[3]

The ravages of the Danish invaders, who, being martial pagans, exulted in burning Christian churches and cloisters, destroyed many monastic establishments: and though Alfred, by his example, encouraged the taste of building them, few were erected again till the reign of Edgar. Dunstan led his young mind to become their earnest patron; and the zeal for re-establishing them on the reformed plan, which had been abopted at Fleury, in France, urged both the sovereign and his mitred preceptor to the greatest violences against the then existing clergy.

[2] Bede, Op. vol. viii. p. 1071.

[3] "We have seen in some places the altars without a roof, fouled by birds and dogs." Ep. p. 1487.

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Ethelwold, whom Dunstan procured to be made a bishop, had land given him for making a translation of the Latin Rule of St. Benedict into the Anglo-Saxon; and it was the boast of the king and his council, that they had founded forty monasteries by their exertions. We have a detail of the formation of one of these, from which some particulars are worth selecting, to preserve a memorial of the manner and progress by which such endowments were effected, and the principles on which they were recommended and patronized.

"On the death of a favourite nobleman of Edgar's court, his brother, an ealdorman, expressed to Bishop Oswald his desire to pursue a better system of life than his worldly occupations permitted. Oswald assured him that his secular affairs would but give him so many opportunities of doing good, if he was careful to observe a conscientious spirit of equity, a merciful moderation, and a constant intention of right conduct. But he added, that they only were free, serene, and released from all danger and anxiety, who renounced the world; and that their piety brought blessings on their country. 'By their merits, the anger of the Supreme Judge is abated; a healthier atmosphere is granted; corn springs up more abundantly; famine and pestilence withdraw; the state is better governed; the prisons are opened; the fettered released; the shipwrecked are relieved; and the sick recovered.' Oswald ended his speech by advising him, if he had any place in his territory fitted for a monastery, to build one upon it, promising to contribute to its maintenance.

"The ealdorman replied, that he had some hereditary land surrounded with marshes, and remote from human intercourse. It was near a forest of various sorts of trees, which had several open spots of good turf, and others of fine grass for pasture. No buildings had been upon it, but some sheds for his herds, who had manured the soil.

"They went together to view it. They found that the waters made it an island. It was so lonely, and yet had so many conveniences for subsistence and secluded devotion, that the bishop decided it to be an advisable station. Artificers were collected. The neighbourhood joined in the labour. Twelve monks came from another cloister to form the new fraternity. Their cells and a chapel were soon raised. In the next winter, they provided the iron and timber, and utensils that were wanted, for a handsome church. In the spring, amid the fenny soil, a firm foundation was laid. The workmen laboured as much from devotion as for profit. Some brought the stones; others made the cement; others applied to the wheel-machinery that raised them on high: and in a

reasonable time, the sacred edifice, with two towers, appeared, on what had been before a desolate waste; and Abbo, celebrated for his literature, was invited from Fleury, to take charge of the schools that were appended to it. Such was the formation of the Ramsey monastery."[4]

The monastic establishments of Edgar were effected with too much violence and injustice to have good results: the truth is as old as the world, though rarely palatable to it, that evil means will have evil consequences. The former clergy were driven into an irascible opposition against the new system, and the discords which ensued from it, among the nobles and nation, led to the second series of Danish invasions. From these, so many disorders followed, that both monks and clergy declined into that low state of morals and mind, from which the Norman conquest afterwards rescued the religion of the country.

The form of the hierarchy established among the Anglo-Saxons was episcopal. An archbishop, and bishops subordinate to him, and receiving the confirmation of their dignity, or their spiritual investiture, from the pope, were the rulers of the church; yet subject, both to their own national as well as to general councils, and also in many points to the witenagemot, of which they were a part, and, in their temporal concerns, to the king. Under the episcopal aristocracy, deans, archdeacons, canons, prebends, and the parochial clergy, enjoyed various powers and privileges.[5] The monks and nuns were governed by

[4] Hist. Ram. p. 396—400.

[5] That the Saxon clergy enjoyed the benefit of tithes, appears from several passages in the Anglo-Saxon laws: thus in Alfred's; "Thy teothan sceattas (tenth monies), and thy first reping gangende (reaping going), and increase give to God." Wilk. p. 32. In Edmund's; "We command teothunge (tithing) to every Christian man by his Christendeme, and the church sceat, and the ælmes feoh. If he will not do it, let him be excommunicated," p. 72. Perhaps this ecclesiastical censure may imply that the common law did not then enforce this benefit. In a more recent law we find, "If a thane has a church with a burying ground, he shall give one-third of his own tithes to the church." Wilk. 130.; even a thræl, or one of the subjected class, p. 12.

Perhaps the fullest display of the feelings of the Anglo-Saxon period, and of an

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their own abbots, abbesses, and priors, assisted, and, in some respects, controlled, by conventual chapters; subject to, yet not always submitting to the pope, and claiming an independence of the episcopal clergy. There were no friars or mendicant orders among the Anglo-Saxons; but they encouraged hermits and pilgrims, and severe penances, and loved relics, and venerated saints, to whose number they largely contributed; and they practised excommunications.

Our limits will not allow us to give a full portraiture of the Anglo-Saxon hierarchy, and its rites and doctrines. A few points only can be mentioned here. But it may be remarked, as some excuse for visible imperfections, that our Anglo-Saxon ancestors had every thing to construct on these subjects. Except some valuable gleams of patriarchal theism, which their poetical epithets for the Deity, that seem to have emanated from their paganism, imply that they retained, there was nothing in the idolatry of their ancestors that could assist them in the formation of their Christian system. They had every thing to learn on this new theme of mind; and they had to begin their pupilage in times of storm and darkness, both within and without them.

Anglo-Saxon churchman, on what has now become a very disputed topic, and a source of so much discord between pastors and their flocks, that some adequate substitution seems at present to be highly advisable, may be read in our Alcuin's letter to Charlemagne on this point. After praising his conversion of the continental Saxons, and noticing his victories over the Huns, "so formidable for their ancient ferocity and courage," he advises him to send well qualified preachers to the new people, and adds: "These things being considered, you may foresee whether it will be better to impose the yoke of *the tenths* on the rude people in the beginning of their faith, so that the exaction may be complete through every possession. It ought to be considered whether the apostles, who were taught by Christ himself, and sent to preach to the world, did exact the exaction of the tenths, or require any thing to be given. We know that the decimation of our substance is a very good thing; but it is better to lose that, than to destroy the faith. We, indeed, born, nourished, and taught in the Catholic faith, *scarcely* (vix) consent to decimate fully our substance. How much more will a tender faith, and an infant mind, and a soul greedy after such things, refuse its consent to this liberality?" p. 1488. In this July, 1836, an English Tithe Act has passed for a general commutation of tithes in England and Wales, which will probably end all disputes on this contested subject, to the satisfaction of both the Clergy and the Agriculturist.

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Reading of the Scriptures.

They were strongly exhorted to study the Scriptures. In this essential point the Anglo-Saxon church formed a remarkable contrast to the Roman Catholic hierarchy of the subsequent ages, and to its present conduct: instead of withholding the sacred volumes, the clergy of Anglo-Saxon England earnestly pressed their frequent perusal, and gave the example in themselves. Bede employed himself, like our Alfred, in making moral and religious selections from them, and also commented on each of their books. Alcuin repeatedly presses their perusal, especially the Gospels[6]; and urges the contemplation of our Saviour's life and precepts.[7] His high and just estimate of the Psalms is very interestingly expressed.[8] Every priest was ordered to have the "halȝan bec," the sacred books, that "he might teach his people rightly who looked up to him;" and he was to take care that they were well written.[9] Very ancient MSS. of Saxon translations of the Gospels, written between Alfred's times and Harold's, still exist.[10] It was not

[6] To one he says, "Scribe Evangelicum in corde tuo," p. 1635. To another, "I wish the four Gospels, instead of the twelve Æneids, filled your breast," p. 1549, "Read diligently, I beseech you, the Gospels of Christ," p. 1561. "Be studious in reading the sacred Scriptures," p. 1583. "The reading of the sacred books is necessary," p. 1546.

[7] Alcuin writes to a friend: "Study Christ as foretold in the books of the Prophets, and as exhibited in the Gospels; and when you find him, do not lose him; but introduce him into the home of thy heart, and make him the ruler of thy life. Love him as thy Redeemer, and thy Governor, and as the dispenser of all thy comforts. Keep his commandments, because in them is eternal life." Op. p. 1637.

[8] See it in his Op. p. 123—126.

[9] Lib. Can. Eccl. Wilk. p. 156. The Bible of Charlemagne, put up for sale in London, in April, 1836, was written by Alcuin, and presented by him to the Emperor on Christmas Day, 801. It is a large folio, containing 449 vellum leaves, being the Latin version of St. Jerome, written in double columns, with a richly ornamented frontispiece in gold and colours. It has four large paintings, and thirty-four large initial letters painted in gold and colours, besides some smaller painted capitals. It is said to have been since purchased for the British Museum. It is in fine preservation, and bound in velvet. At this time it was 1035 years old.

[10] Wanley mentions, of Saxon MSS., one in the Bodleian library, p. 64.; two at Cambridge, p. 116. and 152.; and one in the British Museum, p. 211., in Latin and Saxon, p. 81. He notices one in the Bodleian, p. 250.; and the very beautiful MSS. just before mentioned, Nero, D. 4.; as also several Latin copies written in the Saxon times. One of these is the actual copy given by king Athelstan to the church at Durham. It was in the British Museum, Otho, B. 9.

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only to gratify an Anglo-Saxon ealdorman[11], but also to enable the people at large to hear or read it[12], that Elfric undertook his translation of the Scriptures from the Latin, about the end of the tenth century. From the different styles of the Anglo-Saxon versions of the Gospels, they must have been translated oftener than once.

Transubstantiation.

It is certain that the transubstantiation of the Eucharist was not the established or universal belief of the Anglo-Saxons. In a MS. of Saxon Ecclesiastical Constitutions, it is declared, "the hupel (the sacrament) is Christ's body, *not bodily, but spiritually;* not the body in which he suffered, but the body about which he spoke when he blessed the loaf and wine."[13]

Their relics.

They imbibed the well-intentioned but unwise taste for relics; a taste not only objectionable for the misplaced veneration of things not deserving of it, and fostering mysterious superstitions, which differed in name only from the magic and witchcraft which they were taught to execrate, but also reprehensible for having falsehood for its basis, and, like their legends, confounding all history and truth. The list of relics revered in one church, and stated to have been collected from abroad, and given to it by Athelstan, will afford a complete illustration of these remarks.[14]

[11] Elfric, in his prefatory Saxon epistle, says to him, "Thou badest me, dear one, that I should turn this book of Genesis from Latin to English." MSS. Camb. Wan. p. 162.

[12] In his Latin preface, Elfric says, he has translated the Scriptures from the Latin in the ordinary tongue, "for the edification of the simple, who know only this speech."—"We have therefore put it not into obscure words, but into simple English, that it may easier teach the heart of those who read or hear it." MSS. Camb. Wan. 153.

[13] See it printed from a MS. at Cambridge, written about the time of the Conquest, in Wilkins, p. 159. It adds:—"Understand now, that as the Lord before his suffering might change the loaf to his body, and the wine to his blood, spiritually, so the same is daily blessed through the hands of the priest, the loaf to his body, and the wine to his blood spiritually," p. 160. The same passage is given in Wanley, Cat. p. 111.

[14] It would be too long to give the whole of this Anglo-Saxon document. Some of its chief articles are: a piece of the actual cross; a part of our Saviour's sepulchre; of his clothes; of the manger in which he was laid; of the spear that wounded him; of the table where he supped; of the mount he ascended from; of Mount

Although they used the sign of the cross and its actual representation, they were taught not to pray to the wood, but to the divine Personage who had suffered on it.[15]

Their use of the cross.

That the Anglo-Saxons were not contented with mere ceremonial religion, the lives and works of Aldhelm, Bede, Alcuin, Elfric, and others abundantly show. The character which Alcuin expected from an Anglo-Saxon archbishop of Canterbury he has thus drawn at full length, in a letter to one that was his contemporary:—

Moral duties of their clergy.

"Be the comforter of the wretched, a father to the poor, and affable to all, that you may understand what you are to answer, and let your answers be always seasoned with wisdom; never rash, but honourable; not verbose, but moderate. Let your manners excel in courtesy, be praised for their humility, and be amiable for their piety. Teach not only by words, but by examples, all who live with you, or may visit you. Let your hand be liberal in alms, ready to requite, and frugal in receiving. Provide yourself with treasure in heaven. Make your wealth the redemption of your soul. It is more blessed to give than to receive. Have the Scriptures often in your hands. Be assiduous in prayer. Let virtue dignify your life, and impressive preaching your faith and hope."[16]

The Canons of Edgar record the duties which were exacted from the Anglo-Saxon clergy.

Legal duties enjoined to their priests.

"They were forbidden to carry any controversy among themselves to a lay tribunal. Their own companions were to settle it, or the bishop was to determine it.

Sinai; of the burning bush; of the candle lighted by an angel on the eve of our Saviour's resurrection; of Mount Olive, where he prayed; of his cap and hair; of the Virgin's dress; of the body and garments of the Baptist; of St. Peter's beard and hair; St. Paul's neck-bones; St. Andrew's stick; St. Bartholomew's head; St. Stephen's blood, and of the stone that killed him; of the coals that roasted St. Lawrence; the bones of a great many martyrs; the teeth of St. Maurice and St. Basil; the arms and ribs of other saints; the finger of Mary Magdalene; the cheek of St. Brigida; the veil of St. Agatha, &c. &c. &c. See the whole Saxon list in Dugdale, Monast. vol. i. p. 223—225.

[15] Elfric's words are: "The sign of the Holy Cross is our blessing; and to this cross we pray; yet not to the wood, but to the Almighty Lord that was hanged for us upon it." MSS. Camb. Op. Wanl. p. 118. On their baptism, it may be remarked, that the Saxon homily in Wheloc, p. 64., represents the child as being, before baptism, "sinful through Adam's transgression," but after baptism, and by it, as becoming "God's man and God's child." It was taken every day, for the seven following days, to the mass, to have the communion sacrament given to it. Ælfric. ap. Wilk. Leg. Sax. 172.

[16] Al. Op. p. 1534.

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"No priest was to forsake the church to which he was consecrated, nor to intermeddle with the rights of others, nor to take the scholar of another. He was to learn sedulously his own handicraft, and not put another to shame for his ignorance, but to teach him better. The high-born were not to despise the less-born, nor any to be unrighteous or covetous dealers. He was to baptize whenever required, and to abolish all heathendom and witchcraft. They were to take care of their churches, and apply exclusively to their sacred duties; and not to indulge in idle speech, or idle deeds, or excessive drinking; nor to let dogs come within their church inclosure, nor more swine than a man might govern.

"They were to celebrate mass only in churches, and on the altar, unless in cases of extreme sickness. They were to have at mass their corporalis garment, and the subucula under their alba; and all their officiating garments were to be woven. Each was to have a good and right book. No one was to celebrate mass, unless fasting, and unless he had one to make responses; nor more than three times a day; nor unless he had, for the Eucharist, pure bread, wine, and water. The cup was to be of something molten, not of wood. No woman was to come near the altar during mass. The bell was to be rung at the proper time.

"They were to preach every Sunday to the people, and always to give good examples. They were ordered to teach youth with care, and to draw them to some craft. They were to distribute alms, and urge the people to give them, and to sing the psalms during the distribution, and to exhort the poor to intercede for the donors. They were forbidden to swear, and were to avoid ordeals. They were to recommend confession, penitence, and compensation; to administer the sacrament to the sick, and to anoint him if he desired it; and the priest was always to keep oil ready for this purpose and for baptism. He was neither to hunt, or hawk, or dice; but to play with his book as became his condition.[17]

Elfric's statement of their duties.

We have another review of their duties transmitted to us in the exhortations of Elfric.

"Priests! you ought to be well provided with books and apparel as suits your condition. The mass priest should at least have his missal, his singing book, his reading book, his psalter, his hand book, his penitential, and his numeral one. He ought to have his officiating garments, and to sing from sun-rise, with the nine intervals and nine readings. His sacramental cup should be of gold or silver, glass or tin, and not of earth, at least not of wood. The altar should be always clean, well clothed, and not defiled with dirt. There should be no mass without wine.

"Take care that you be better and wiser in your spiritual craft than worldly men are in theirs, that you may be fit teachers of true wisdom. The priest should preach rightly the true belief;

[17] Wilk. Leg. 85—87.

read fit discourses; visit the sick; and baptize infants, and give the unction when desired. No one should be a covetous trader, nor a plunderer, nor drunk often in wine-houses, nor be proud or boastful, nor wear ostentatious girdles, nor be adorned with gold, but to do honour to himself by his good morals.

"They should not be litigious, nor quarrelsome, nor seditious, but should pacify the contending; nor carry arms, nor go to any fight, though some say that priests should carry weapons when necessity requires; yet the servant of God ought not to go to any war or military exercise. Neither a wife nor a battle becomes them, if they will rightly obey God and keep his laws as becomes their state."[18]

An Anglo-Saxon sermon

The Anglo-Saxon clergy sometimes made very earnest addresses to the people. Some specimens of one of these, about nine hundred years old, will show the tone and feeling they displayed.

"Dearest men! I intreat, and would humbly teach you that you should grieve now for your sins, because in the future life our tears will tell for nought. Hear the Lord now, who invites and will grant us forgiveness. Here he is very gentle with us; there he will be severe. Here his mild-heartedness is over us; there will be an eternal judgment. Here is transient joy; there will be perpetual sorrow.

"Study, my beloved, those things which are about to come to you. Humble yourselves here, that you be not abased hereafter. Ah! dearest men! who is so hard of heart, that he cannot weep at the punishments that may succeed, and dread their occurrence? What is better to us in this world than to be penitent for our transgressions, and to redeem them by almsgiving? This world and all within it pass away, and then with our soul alone we must satisfy the Almighty God. The father cannot then help the son, nor the child the parent, but each will be judged according to his own deeds.

"O man! what are you doing? Be not like the dumb cattle. O think and remember how great a separation the Deity has placed between us and them. He sends to us an understanding soul, but they have none. Watch, then, O man! Pray and intreat while thou may. Remember that for thee the Lord descended from the high heaven to the most lowly state, that he might raise thee to that exalted life. Gold and silver cannot aid us from those grim and cruel torments, from those flames that will never be extinguished, and from those serpents that never die. There they are whetting their bloody teeth, to wound and tear our bodies without mercy, when the great trumpet shall sound, and the dreadful voice exclaim, 'Arise, and behold the mighty and the terrible King! You that have been stedfast and are chosen, arise! Lo!

[18] Wilk. Leg. 169—171.

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your heavenly Master comes. Now you shall see him whom you loved before you became dust. Come, and partake a glory which no eye has seen, and no ear has heard of. But, you wicked and impious, arise you, and fall abandoned into that deep and infernal pit, where misery for ever must be your happiness and honour.'

"O! how miserable and joyless will those become who neglected the divine commandments, to hear this fearful sentence! Always should these things be before our eyes. Where are the kings that once triumphed, and all the mighty of the earth? Where are their treasures? Where is their splendid apparel? Oh, for how short a life are they now brought to an endless death! For what a transient glory have they earned a lasting sorrow! How paltry the profit for which they have brought these wretched torments! How momentary was the laughter that has been changed to these bitter and burning tears!"[19]

The teacher enforced these ideas by introducing a legendary tale, which displays some strength of imagination.

"A holy man had once a spiritual vision. He saw a soul on the point of being driven out of a body, but she dared not leave it, because she saw an execrable fiend standing before her. 'What are you doing?' cried the Devil. 'Why do you not come out? Do you hope that Michael the archangel will come with his company of angels, and carry you soon away?' Then another devil answered and said, 'You need not fear that. I know his works, and, day and night, was always with him.'

"The wretched soul, seeing this, began to shriek and cry, 'Wo! wo! wretched me, why was I ever created? Why did I ever enter this foul and polluted body?' She looked at her body, and exclaimed, 'Miserable corpse! it was thou that didst seize the wealth of the stranger, and wast ever heaping up treasure. It was thou that wouldest deck thyself with costly raiment. When thou wast all scarlet, I was all black; when thou wast merry, I was sad; when thou didst laugh, I wept. O wretched thou, what art thou now but a loathsome mass, the food of worms! Thou mayest rest a considerable time on the earth, but I shall go groaning and miserable to hell.'

"The Devil then exclaimed, 'Pierce his eye, because with his eye-sight he was active in all injustice. Pierce his mouth, because with that he eat and drank and talked, as he lusted. Pierce his heart, because neither pity, religion, nor the love of God was ever in it.'

"While the soul was suffering these things, a great splendour shone before her, and she asked what the brightness meant. The Devil told her it came from the celestial regions. 'And you shall go through those dwellings most bright and fair, but must not stay there. You shall hear the angelic choirs, and see the ra-

[19] Wilk. Leg. 173, 174.

diance of all the holy; but there you cannot dwell.' Again the wretched soul exclaimed, 'Wo to me, that I ever saw the light of the human world!'"[20]

The address thus concludes:—

"My dearest men! Let us then remember that the life we now live is short, sinful, frail, falling, wretched, and deceitful to all that love it. We live in trouble, and we die in sorrow; and when it ends, they also who would not repent and give alms must go to torment, and there suffer an immeasurable punishment for their misdeeds. There the afflicted soul will hang over hot flames, and be beaten and bound, and thrown down into the blackest place, especially they who will show no mercy now. But let us turn ourselves to a better state, and earn an eternal kingdom with Christ and his saints, for ever and ever, world without end. Amen."[21]

Their ideas of heaven.

The future world is thus painted in another of the Anglo-Saxon homilies:—

"Let us reflect on the happiness we may lose. Let us resolve to earn that brightest of all places, and that most beautiful felicity with angels and high-angels, and with all the sainted ones in the rapture of heaven's kingdom. There it will last for ever. There is eternal life. There is the King of all kings, and the Ruler of all rulers, and the Creator of all creatures. There is peace without sorrow, light without darkness, and joy without an end. There will be the beginning of everlasting happiness; the beauty and delight of all that is holy; youth without age; the inexhaustible glory of the spirit in the highest splendour; peace and comfort; health unvarying; a most blissful throne; the most lovely fruits, and the most exalted power."[22]

Paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer and Creed.

They have left us several paraphrases and translations of the Pater-noster[23], and the Creed[24]; some in poetry and some in prose, as if it had been a favourite exercise of their devotional leisure. There are others of the Doxology.[25]

[20] Wilk. Leg. p. 175. [21] Ibid. p. 176.

[22] MSS. Cant. Wanl. p. 117. A shorter description occurs in another. "There will be our eternal recompence between angels and high-angels for ever in heaven's kingdom. There love will never err, nor enmity disturb. There the sacred societies will always dwell in beauty and glory and pleasure. There will be mirth and majesty, and everlasting bliss with the Deity himself." MSS. Cant. Wanl. p. 140.

[23] Of the Lord's Prayer, see the Saxon paraphrases from MSS. in Wanley, p. 48. 147. 267. Translations of it are in Ib. p 51. 81. 160. 197. 202. 221. There are several homilies upon it.

[24] Of the Creed, see the poetical paraphrase in Wanley, p. 48., and various translations, p. 51. 202. 221. &c.

[25] Wan. MSS. p. 145. 48. 51.

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Their confessions.

Written specimens of the questions and answers at their scrift and andetnes, or confession, have also survived to us, some of which are interesting to read.[26]

Proclamation for an Anglo-Saxon public fast.

When one of the great Danish armies landed in England, the following penitentiary injunctions were issued:—

"We all need that we should diligently strive to obtain God's mercy and mild-heartedness, and that we, by his help, may withstand our enemies.

"Now it is our will that all folk should do general penance for three days, on bread, herbs, and water; that is, on (Monanbay, Tiperbay, Wobnerbay,) Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Michaelmas; and let every man come barefoot to church, without gold and ornaments, and go to confession (rhpirc), and all go out with the holy relics, and call inwardly in their heart diligently on Christ; and let every man set apart a hide-penny, or a penny's worth, and bring it to church, and afterwards divide it into three before the confessor and the town-gerefa, and, if he will not perform this, let him pay, according to law, a bunda, or villager, thirty pence; a thrœl, or slave, by his hide; a thegn, thirty shillings. For the three days let them be freed from work, and in every minster let all the company sing their Psalter the three days, and let every mass-priest say mass for our lord, and for all his people; and there, besides, let men say masses every day, in every minster one mass separately for the necessities that surround us, till things become better: and at every tide-song let all the assembly, with bended knees, before God's altar, sing the third Psalm; and every year henceforth do this, till the Almighty pity us, and grant us to overcome our enemy. God help us. Amen."[27]

Their other penitentiary systems.

The Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastics visited most crimes with appropriate penance, and especially homicides, both voluntary and involuntary, and even the intention to commit them. What they called their deep-like, or severe penance, is thus described:—

"He must lay aside his weapons, and travel barefoot a long way; nor be sheltered of a night. He must fast and watch and pray both day and night, and willingly weary himself, and be so careless of his dress that the iron should not come to his hair or nails.

[26] See various confessions at length from a MS. in Wanley, p. 50. 145.; and several others.

[27] MS. C. C. Cantab. ap. Wanley, p. 138.

"He must not enter a warm bath, nor a soft bed; nor eat flesh, nor any thing by which he can be intoxicated; nor may he go inside of a church, but seek some holy place, and confess his guilt, and pray for intercession. He must kiss no man, but be always grieving for his sins." [28]

Liberty to buy off penance.

It was an invention of deep policy, though of suspicious piety, that they allowed the wealthy to purchase a removal of the penances imposed. This gave the church an interest that crimes should be committed, as well as that the penances should be too severe to be personally performed; yet this dangerous privilege was used for the best purposes. The following is one of their regulations on this subject:—

"Many men may redeem their penances by alms:

"He that hath ability may raise a church to the praise of God; and, if he has wherewithal, let him give land to it, and allow ten young men, so that they may serve in it, and minister the daily service. He may repair churches where he can, and make folk-ways, with bridges over deep waters, and over miry places; and let him assist poor men's widows, and step-children, and foreigners. He may free his own slaves, and redeem the liberty of those of other masters, and especially the poor captives of war; and let him feed the needy, and house them, clothe and warm them, and give them bathing and beds." [29]

It is impossible to praise too highly the benevolence of these substitutions.

The permission to buy off penance by money could not but become a source of the greatest abuses; nor was it less objectionable to commute them, if at all useful, for certain quantities of repetitions, by rote, of some devotional forms, which, thus reiterated, could have little more meaning or efficacy than the same amount of unintelligible nonsense, or of a parrot's exclamations.

The law thus provided for it:—

"A man may redeem one day's fasting by a penny, or by repeating two hundred Psalms. He may redeem a twelvemonth's

[28] Leges Edgari, Wilk. p. 94. [29] Ibid. p. 95.

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fasting by thirty shillings, or may set a man free who is of that worth. And for one day's fast he may sing six times the Beati Immaculati, and six Pater-nosters; or for a day's fast he may kneel and bend sixty times to the earth, with a Pater-noster; or he may bend all his limbs to God, and fifteen times sing 'Miserere mei Dominus,' and fifteen Pater-nosters." [30]

Their saints.

That the Anglo-Saxons continued the error of the ancient world, in referring the phenomena of nature almost always to supernatural agency, though with the substitution of saints, angels, and demons, for the gods and goddesses, heroes, genii, and dæmons of antiquity, is a true assertion as to the nation at large, and as to their religious instructors, with few exceptions. Their ignorance of natural science led them to this mistake, as its abundance with us has urged our philosophy into the opposite extreme. Our ancestors were inclined to ascribe nothing to natural causes; and we tend to attribute to these every phenomenon. They saw nothing but the Divinity acting around them; and some of us exclude Him wholly from His creation. Both extremes are erroneous. The probability is, that the Supreme does every thing by the natural causes which He has organised to act for the general good, so far as their agency will from time to time produce it; but where their operation becomes at any time insufficient to achieve His purposes, they are assisted by His immediate interference, or by the introduction of new effective agents that are more suited to the new circumstances that arise, and the new improvements that He intends to establish. He, as our Great Alfred suggested, binds Himself in no chains as to the future guidance of nature, but keeps Himself free, at all times, to do whatever His wisdom finds to be successively most expedient for the benefit of His whole creation, and therefore for every part of it; for the whole cannot be benefited unless the portions partake of the advantage.

[30] Leges Edgari, Wilk. p. 96.

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But the Anglo-Saxons pursued the custom of the day in venerating those who, after death, were invested by the ecclesiastical authorities with the dignity of saints; they had several of these of native origin, who were held in great estimation, and whose lives were written with zealous enthusiasm.[31] They ascribed to their saints great powers over nature and disease, and human life, as the classical nations had done to their fabulous divinities; and thus impeded their own progress in natural philosophy, by substituting imaginary agents for natural causes. Our ancestors also respected hermits, who lived in woods or cells, retired from the world.[32]

Their views of Anti-christ.

The evil personage called Anti-christ, who, it is supposed, will accompany the last ages of the world, was a frequent subject of contemplation among the Anglo-Saxons. They thought that he was about to come in the tenth and eleventh centuries.[33] One of their discourses upon him begins with "Beloved men! there is great need that we should be aware of the fearful time that is now approaching. Now, very soon will be the times of Anti-christ; therefore we ought to expect him, and carefully think upon him." A long detail then follows on this subject[34]; but the most curious account of him is that of Alcuin, which he addresses to Charlemagne.[35]

[31] As St. Guthlac, St. Edwin, St. Oswald, St. Boniface, St. Swithin, St. Neot, St. Edmund, St. Chad, St. Winifreda, St. Dunstan, St. Ethelwald, St. Edward, and many others.

[32] That the lives of the Saxon hermits, or anchorites, were not unusefully employed, we have a very splendid proof in the Saxon MS. of the Gospels in the British Museum, Nero, D. 4. Wanley justly calls this, "An incomparable specimen of Anglo-Saxon calligraphy," p. 253. It is beautifully illuminated and decorated: Billfrith, *the anchorite*, was the person who so adorned it. He is mentioned by his Saxon coadjutor, Aldred, to have ornamented it with gold and gems, and with silver gilt over. Turgot, the Anglo-Saxon, also declares him to have been "in aurificii arte precipuus." Wanl. ib. It seems to have been written about the time of Alfred.

[33] Elfric thought, from the calamities of Ethelred's reign, that the end of the world was near: "By this we may understand that this world is passing away, and very nigh its end." MSS. Vesp. D. 14.

[34] The Sermon is printed, with a Latin translation, in the Appendix to the Saxon Dictionary.

[35] A few particulars of Alcuin's fancy may amuse. "He is to be born of a most

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flagitious robber and harlot, with the aid of the Devil, at Babylon. He will pervade Palestine; convert kings, princes, and people; and send his missionaries all over the world. He will work many miracles; bring fire from heaven; make trees vegetate in a moment; calm and agitate the sea at his will; transform various objects; change the course of rivers; command the winds; and apparently raise the dead. He will bitterly persecute Christianity. He will discover hidden treasures, and lavish them among his followers: a dreadful period of tribulation will follow. He will not come till the Roman empire has entirely ceased, and that cannot be while the kings of the French continue. One of the French kings is, at last, to obtain the whole Roman empire, and will be the greatest and the last of all kings. He is to go to Jerusalem, and lay down his crown and sceptre on Mount Olivet. Then Anti-christ is to appear, and Gog and Magog to emerge. Against them this French king of the Romans is to march; to conquer all nations, destroy all idols, and restore Christianity. The Jews are to be restored," &c. &c. Alc. Op. 1211—1215. Our Elfric, in the tenth century, thought his reign was then approaching, for he wrote: "Dear men! there is great need that we should be aware of the fearful time which is to come. Now will be *very soon* the times of Anti-christ." Wanl. Cat. p. 28. 33

## CHAP. IV.

### *The* Anglo-Saxon *Te Deum; Jubilate; Magnificat; and Specimens of their Prayers.*

CHAP. IV.

Their Te Deum.

Tþe, Loð, þe heriath, the, Þrihten, þe anðettah.
The, æcne fæðer, eal eorþ epuþthath.
The, ealle englaſ, the, heoſenaſ anð ealle anpealðum.
The, cheruðim anð ſeraphim unablinnenðlice ſteſne clypath
Þaliz! Þaliz! Þaliz! ðrihten, Loð þeriða!
Fulle ſýnt heoſenaſ anð eorþe mæzenthrýmmeſ þulðreſ thineſ.
The, pulðorful ernðracena þerið,
The, pitizena herzenðlic zetel,
The, cýthra ſcýneð heriath here,
The, embhrýrſt eorthena haliz anðet zeſomnunz,
Fæðer, ormætef mæzen-thrýmmeſ!
Ærpurthne thinne ſothne anð anlicne ſunu;
Þalizne pitoðlice ſherſtizenðne Laſt.
Thu, cýnz pulðreſ cýninzeſ' Lhriſte,
Thu, fæðereſ ece thu eart ſunu,
Tha to alýrenne thu anſenze mann, thu ne arcuneðoſt fæmnan innath.
Thu oferſrithedum ðeatheſ anzan; Thu onlýſðeſt zelýfeðum þicu heoſena.
Thu on tha ſrithran healfe Loðeſ ſetſt on pulðre fæðereſ.
Ðema thu eart zelyfeð þeran toþeanð,
The eorthorthice þe halriath thinum theoþum zehelp, tha of ðeorrýrthum blode thu alýſðeſt.
Ece ðo mið halzum thinum pulðor beon ſorzýfen.
Þal ðo ſolc thin; anð bletſa ýrfeþeariðnýſſe thine.
Ærnð zenece hý anð upahof hý oth on ecnecnýſſe.
Thuſh ſýnðriſze ðazaſ þe bletriath the
Ærnð þe heriath naman thinne on þopulðe anð a þopulð.
Lemeðema ðæze thirum buton ſýnne uſ zehealðan.
Lemiltra upe, Lemiltra.
Sý miltheoretnýſ thin oſer uſ ſra ſra-þe hýhtath on the.
On the ic hihte; ic ne beo zeſcýnð on ecnýſſe.[1]

The Jubilate.

Ðrýmath ðrihtne ealle eorthan; theoriath ðrihtne on blisſe; Inzath on zerihthe hiſ on blithneſſe.
Witath ſortham the ðrihten he iſ Loð; he þorihte uſ, anð na þe ſýlfe uſ; ſolc hiſ anð ſceap ſoſtorþnotheſ hiſ.
Inzath zatu hiſ on anððetneſſe, caſeftunaſ hiſ on ýmenum anðbettath.

[1] MS. Cott. Lib. Vespasian, A. 1.

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Þeɹiaꞇh namam hiɹ ; ɹoɹꞇham ꞇhe þýnɹum iɹ bɹihꞇen, on ecneɹɹe mildheoɹꞇneƚ hiɹ, anð oꞇh on cýnɹene anð cýnɹene ɹoꞇhfæɹꞇneɹɹ hiɹ.[2]

The Magnificat.

Min ɹaþel meþɹaꞇh Ðɹihꞇen ꝛ min ȝaɹꞇ ȝeblifɹuðe on Loðe minum Þælenðe.

Foɹꞇham ꞇhe he ȝeþeah hiɹ ꞇhinene eað-moðneɹɹe, ɹoꞇhlice heonun-ɹoɹꞇh me eaðiȝe ɹeeȝaꞇh ealle cneoþeɹɹa.

Foɹꞇham ꞇhe me mycele ꞇhinȝ ðýðe ɹe ꞇhe mihꞇiȝ iɹ ꝛ hiɹ nama iɹ haliȝ.

ꝛ hiɹ mild-heoɹꞇneƚ oþ cneoþeɹɹe on cneoþeɹɹe hine onðþæðenðum.

Þe poɹhꞇe mæȝne on hiɹ eaɹme. Þe ꞇo-bælðe ꞇha oþeɹmoðan on moðe hýɹa heoɹꞇan.

Þe apeaɹiþ ꞇha þican oþ ɹeꞇle anð ꞇha eað-moðan upahoþ.

Þinȝɹiȝenðe he mið ȝoðum ȝeþýlðe ꝛ oþeþ-moðe ibele ɹoɹlec.

Þe aþenȝ Iɹɹahel hiɹ cnihꞇ ꝛ ȝemunðe hiɹ mild heoɹꞇneɹɹe.

Spa he ɹɹæc ꞇo uþum fæðeɹum Abɹahame anð hiɹ fæðe on à peoɹuld.[3]

The following addresses to the Deity are selected from the Anglo-Saxon remains, to complete the picture of their minds; and to show that, notwithstanding the illiterate age in which they lived, and the superstitions which prevailed, yet that the language of their devotion was not discreditable to their general intellect. These instances will indicate that they studied to connect it both with their feelings and their reason. They are in a poetical form: —

Anglo-Saxon prayers.

Oh Lord beloved!
Oh God our judge!
hear me:
Everlasting Ruler!
I know that my soul
with sins is wounded.
Heal thou it,
O Lord of heaven!
And restore thou it,
O Governor of life!
For thou most easily may,
Physician of us all!
of all that exist
far or wide.

2.

O Sovereign of radiance!
Creator of man!
benign be thy mind
to me for good.
Give me thy pardon,
and thy pity.
May he be merciful,
that on earth here

[2] MS. Cott. Vitell. E. 18. Another version from Vespas. A. 1. may be seen in Wanley's excellent Catalogue of the Saxon MSS. p. 222.

[3] Saxon Gosp. Luc. c. 1.

we may resist the devil,
and work his will!
Woe to him for his jollity
when he the retribution
shall have and see,
unless he from the evil
has previously ceased.
But happy will he be
who here on earth,
day and night,
obeys the Lord,
and always works his will.
Well to him will be this work
when he the retribution
shall have and see,
if he continues it
to a good end.

3.

O Light of light!
Oh joy of life!
grant it to me.
Blessed King of Glory!
what I for my soul
pray of the heavens
for the eternal honour.
Thou art the benign God;
thou hast and rulest
One over all.
Earth and heaven,
of their various creatures,
Thou art the true Creator;
One over all
those living on the earth,
as in heaven above;
thou art the Saviour God.
Nor may any man
profit thee
that are collected together
over the wide ground;
men on the earth,
over all the world.
Nor can we ever say,
nor indeed know,
how noble thou art,
Eternal Lord!
Nor though the host of angels
up in heaven,
in their assembled wisdom,
should begin to say it,
might they ever narrate,
nor the number know,
how great thou art,
Mighty Lord!
But vast is still the wonder,
Governor of Angels,
if thou thyself should excite them.
Chief of Victory,
how glorious thou art,
mighty and strong in power!
King of all kings!
the living Christ!
Creator of all the worlds!
Ruler of angels,
Noblest of all nobility,
Saviour Lord!
Thou art the Prince
that on former days,
the joy of all women,
fair wast born
at Bethlehem,
that city,
a comfort to mankind!
an honour to all
the children of men!
To them that believe
on the living God,
and on that eternal light
up in the skies.
Thy power is so great,
Mighty Lord!
so that none truly know it,
nor the exhaltation
of the state of the angels
of the King of heaven.
I confess thee,
Almighty God!
I believe on thee,
beloved Saviour!
that thou art
the great one,
and the strong in power,
and the condescending
of all gods,
and the Eternal King
of all creatures;
and I am
one of little worth,
and a depraved man,
who is sinning here

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very nearly
day and night.
I do as I would not;
sometimes in actions,
sometimes in words,
sometimes in thought,
very guilty
in conscious wickedness
oft and repeatedly.
But I beseech thee now,
Lord of heaven!
And pray to thee,
best of human-born,
that thou pity me,
Mighty Lord!
High King of Heaven!
and the Holy Spirit;
and aid me
Father Almighty!
that I thy will
may perform,
before from this frail life
I depart.
Refuse me not,
Lord of Glory!
But grant me,
blessed, illustrious King!
permit me, with angels,
up to ascend
to sit in the sky;
and praise the God of heaven
with the tongue of the holy
world without end.[4] Amen.

Of the Latin prayers at the end of every psalm in the Saxon and Latin Psalter, the following may be selected as specimens of the Anglo-Saxon private devotions in prose: —

"O Lord! our King, and our God! propitious, hearken unto the voice of thy petitioners. Deign to hear them devoutly approaching thee in the morning hour, that through the greatness of thy mercy, and cleansed from all the stain of sins, we may enter thy house, and every where sing thy praises in thy fear."[5]

"What is man, O Lord! that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, unless thou shouldest redeem him, that he may not perish for ever? Impart therefore to us the help we need; Thou who hast given thy precious blood for us! Oh, grant that those whom thy death has redeemed may glorify thee in their lives."[6]

"Regard and hear us, O Lord, our God! and illuminate, by the contemplation of thy presence, the eyes of our mind, that we sleep not in death; assist these our endeavours to please thee, which thou thyself hast afforded to us. Give us the full accomplishment of that good work, who hast given us its first principle, the will to do it. Grant that we may be able to complete it, Oh, thou who hast imparted the wish to begin it."[7]

"Make known to us, O Lord! the ways of life, and fill us with the delights of thy right hand. Place thy yoke upon us, which is so sweet under thy direction, and grant to each of us that he may bless thee with the affection of his heart, and glorify thee by his intellect, through," &c.[8]

[4] See the original Saxon in Cædmon, App.
[5] Spelman's Anglo-Saxon Psalter, addit. to psalm v.
[6] Ibid. ad. ps. viii.
[7] Ibid. ad. ps. xii.
[8] Ibid. ps. xv.

"Oh Lord! our strength, and the horn of our salvation! impart to us the fervour of thy love, that our minds may love thee with unwearied affection; and by the effect of this attachment to thee may be turned towards our neighbour with benignity, through," &c.[9]

"Govern us, O Lord! and then we shall want nothing; for what is there to be desired under thy government but thyself alone? What is there to be sought for while thou sparest us, but thy glory? Lead us then through the path of justice, and convert our souls from every evil action to virtue. May we, under thy protection, neither fear the adversities that may assail us, nor dread the approach of the shadow of death or its evils."[10]

"Lord! strong and mighty! Lord of the virtues! King of Glory! cleanse our heart from every sin; keep our hands guiltless; and separate our souls from all vanity, that we may be fit to receive in thy holy place blessings from thee, O Lord, our God."[11]

"O Lord, our King! who continueth for ever; to whom all the earth is deservedly resounding with the voices of praise, and singing thy glory and honour; grant, we beseech thee, strength to thy people, against the evils of the present day, that we may enjoy prosperity here, and trust in thine eternal promises hereafter, through," &c.[12]

"O Lord, our Redeemer! O God of truth! who hast redeemed mankind, sold to sin, not by silver or gold, but by the blood of thy precious Son, be our protector, and look down upon our lowliness; and because great is the multitude of thy kindnesses, oh, raise our desires always to partake them, and excite our minds to explore them, through," &c.[13]

"O Lord! who hast become our refuge before the mountains were made, or the dry land was formed: Author of time, yet without any limit of time thyself! In thy nature there is no past. To thee the future is never new. There everlasting virtue is always present. There immutable truth endures for ever."[14]

"For thy name's sake, O Lord! extend to us thy mercy. What is sweeter than that by which thou hast freed us from death, and made us thine associates in immortality! By which thou suppliest our helplessness, and grantest to us to continue in the fulness of holiness. May it now render us acceptable to thee, as it has already reconciled thee to us when alienated from thee."[15]

"O Lord! who dwellest in the loftiest space; whose ineffable Godhead is confined to no created circuit, nor can be described by any mortal breath; look down, we implore thee, on thy humble servants, both in heaven and on earth. May no pride creep into our thoughts or actions which can avert from us the eyes of thy mercy! May that sincere humility and submission be within us,

[9] Spelman's Anglo-Saxon Psalter, addit. to psalm xvii.
[10] Ibid. ps. xxxii.
[11] Ibid. ps xxiii.
[12] Ibid. ps. xxviii.
[13] Ibid. ps. xxx.
[14] Ibid. ps. lxxxix.
[15] Ibid. ps. cviii.

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which may make us worthy of thy regard, and raise us to the reward of thy future glorification." [16]

"O God of heaven and earth! whose all-seeing providence is everlasting! O God, by whose death even Tartarus was illuminated; by whose resurrection the multitude of thy holy ones was gladdened; at whose ascension the host of angels exulted; we implore the excelling virtue of thy glory, that directed by thee into the way of eternal life, we may be defended by that arm, under whose protection those who are honoured by thy favour magnify thee in heaven." [17]

"Purify, O Lord, our God! our heart and reins by the fire of the Holy Spirit, that we may serve thee in chastity of heart and body. Free us from all vice, and have mercy upon us, whom thou hast redeemed by thine inestimable intercourse." [18]

The prayer to the 49th Psalm concludes thus: —

"Despise not our contrite and humble heart; and by the ineffable power of the Trinity, may there be the testimony of the One Divinity that, strengthened by the Father, renewed by the Son, and guarded by the Holy Spirit, we may rejoice in thee." [19]

[16] Spelman's Anglo-Saxon Psalter, addit. to psalm cxii.
[17] Ibid. ps. cxxxviii.
[18] Ibid. ps. xxv.
[19] Ibid. ps. xlix.

A

# VINDICATION

OF THE

## GENUINENESS

OF THE

# ANCIENT BRITISH POEMS

OF

ANEURIN, TALIESIN, LLYWARCH HEN,
AND MERDHIN,

WITH

SPECIMENS OF THE POEMS.

---

BY SHARON TURNER, F.A.S. R.A.L.S.

---

FIFTH EDITION.

# PREFACE.

THE genuineness of these poems has been publicly impeached by Mr. Pinkerton in his preface to Babour, and in a Review (not distinguished by the urbanity of its style, or the correctness of its criticism,) of my Anglo-Saxon History, published in the Critical Review for January, 1800. Mr. Malcolm Laing has also attacked them in a note to his Dissertation on Ossian's Poems, and some other gentlemen in private societies have occasionally depreciated them.

The hostility of men respectable for their literary talents, could not be continued against these poems, without much injury to their credit. It was, therefore, necessary to abandon them to undeserved neglect, or to vindicate them from the objections of their enemies, by a series of legitimate reasoning.

Having quoted them in the first volume of the Anglo-Saxon History, I was charged with gross credulity for accrediting them. Thus, unexpectedly involved in the controversy, I hope to be pardoned for intruding on the public with a publication on the subject. As I am an Englishman, I have no patriotic prejudice in their favour; but as an amateur of literature, I think them deserving of attention; and for the reasons which I shall proceed to state, I believe those to which I have alluded to be genuine.

London, 1803.

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A

# VINDICATION

OF THE

# GENUINENESS

OF THE

# ANCIENT BRITISH POEMS.

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It is not unknown to the curious reader, that there are Welsh poems extant, which are stated to have been written by Aneurin, Taliesin, Llywarch Hên, and Merdhin, who lived in the sixth century. Other literary impostures having subjected these poems also to a similar suspicion, and many gentlemen having desired to be informed of the nature of the evidence on which they can be ascribed to authors so remote, it may perhaps be acceptable to literary men, to have the evidence in their favour, and the arguments by which they may be supported, fairly and dispassionately stated.

Many persons are better qualified for this office than myself, but as no one has yet particularly discussed the subject, I think I shall not impertinently apply some part of the leisure of the summer to its consideration. I quoted these poems, in the History of the Anglo-Saxons, because I thought them genuine; and the objections which this occasioned have induced me to investigate the question as carefully as I was able. I will adduce with temper, and I hope with fairness, the evidence in their favour: and I will notice, in the proper places, all the arguments which I have heard against them. The cool and steady judgment of the public, which, after due reflection, never decides wrongfully between contending partizans, will determine the dispute.

The subject is unquestionably important. So much gloom rests upon the history of our island, during the period of the Saxon invasions, that the discovery of any authors, contemporary with that period, could not but be a valuable present to our curiosity. If these poems be genuine, they must furnish very interesting matter for the contemplation of the antiquary and the philosopher, even although their rude and martial strains should want those elegancies which delight the refined taste. Their general subject is, above all others, interesting: it is the struggle of the ancient Britons against the invading Saxons. They describe the battles

of which all other memory has perished. They celebrate many patriotic warriors, whom time has almost defrauded of their fame. They exhibit curious, and striking, manners. They throw much light on the history of their æra, and they contain many passages which poets need not disdain to applaud. Indeed, the celebrity which they have for ages enjoyed among their own countrymen, is an ample testimony of their genius.

But if they had no other merit, they would be highly valuable for their language. What can gratify the philologer more than to have such specimens of the language of the ancient inhabitants of these islands? The language of the British bards, in the sixth century, must have been substantially the same with the language of the Britons who withstood the valour of Cæsar, and, of course, must present us with a venerable image of, perhaps, the earliest language that appeared in Europe. The philosopher who loves to trace the progress of intellect, and to observe its original associations, and selected forms, in those barbarous times when the arts of mental cultivation were little understood, will highly appreciate the works of men who flourished at a period so early and so singular. If these poems be genuine, they are of the greatest value; and it cannot be a matter of small moment, to inquire if they be genuine.

These ancient poems, and their advocates, have been arraigned with a severity which, on literary subjects, is always very blameable. Whatever latitude may be given to the angry feelings in political controversy, where the magnitude of the contending interests becomes an apology for occasional warmth, there can be no justification of asperity on a point of antiquarian doubt. Indeed, any anger between literary men is not only unbecoming but absurd. The world takes no part in their animosity. It will always form its own conclusions, not from the language, but the facts of the controversy. We who now read with disgust, the virulence even of a Milton or a Scaliger, and who turn with abhorrence, from the malignity of a Schioppius, cannot doubt but that our inferior works will be as revolting to the taste of our posterity, if virulence contaminate the pages, which ought to be sacred to fair statement, to forbearing civility, and dispassionate reasoning. It is a disgrace to no one to disbelieve the genuineness of the ancient Welsh poetry, if the evidence does not satisfy his judgment; but neither can they be culpable for accrediting it, who think that the balance of probabilities is decisively in its favour.

These poems have not become known to us under the circumstances which attended those of Chatterton and Macpherson, or the pseudo-Shakspeare. They are not works now starting up suddenly for the first time to our knowlege. They do not owe their discovery to any individual. No friendly chest—no ruinous turret—no auspicious accident—has given them to us. No man's interest or reputation is connected with their discovery. Their supporters are, therefore, at least, disinterested. They have

been in existence, and have been known to be so for many centuries, but they have never been brought forward to answer any purpose of private interest, or national vanity. Their countrymen have long fondly cherished them, but have been, till very lately, even censurably careless whether any of their neighbours either knew or respected them. Such indifference as this, about documents so curious, never yet has attended any forgery. Nothing can be more favourable to their cause — nothing can more strongly mark the difference which subsists between these poems and all those writings which are known to have been fabricated.

It may be reasonably asked, Why, as they have been so long in existence and credit in Wales, have they not become more known to the world before our time?

The observation applies, however, not to these bards only, but to all the Welsh literature; for although that has been long in existence, though above 1000 MSS.[1] of its different branches are still in being, yet which of them has been consulted or spoken of by Englishmen? The Welsh have poems, romances, chronicles, grammars, treatises on music, agriculture, and astronomy, theological, ethical, and medical works of different authors, from the time of the bards to our own, which are nevertheless as little known in England, or in Europe, as the compositions of the Chinese. — With the writings of most of the nations on the Continent we are familiar; but we have permitted ourselves to be ignorant of the literature of our neighbours, who are only parted from us by the Severn and the Wye. Has this been our fault or theirs? Let us inquire.

Almost all the men who cultivated literature in Wales before the sixteenth century, unfortunately for our indolent curiosity, wrote in their native language. The bards of the twelfth, and succeeding centuries, whose genuineness no man affects to doubt, their chronicles, their clergy, and their authors on other subjects, did not extend their views of fame beyond their petty principality, and, therefore, composed in Welsh. But the Anglo-Normans, and their descendants, would as willingly have studied Coptic as Welsh. Such, at least, was the opinion of the *polished* and *elegant* Anglo-Saxon about it, that in one of their grants of land in Cornwall, the king, after mentioning the Saxon name of the place, says, "which the inhabitants there called *barbarico nomine*, by the barbarous name of Pendyfig."[2] This barbarous name was Welsh!

The unvarying neglect of this language, and its authors, descended from the Anglo-Saxons to the Anglo-Normans, and, of course, the knowledge of Welsh literature was confined to the Welsh counties.

It is a truth, which certainly casts some disgrace on our national curiosity or our candour, that unless Welshmen had themselves

[1] This number of MSS. of course includes many transcripts of the same compositions.

[2] MSS. Cott. Lib. Claud. B. 6. p. 38.

introduced their authors to our notice, we should to this day have been as ignorant of their literature as we are of the MSS. and monuments now existing in Great Tartary. The curious and interesting catalogue of the Welsh MSS. which Edward Lhwyd made from personal inspection, and printed in his Archæologia, first made Europe acquainted with the nature and extent of his countrymen's compositions. It is greatly to be lamented, that Lhwyd was patronized so meanly, and that misfortune was permitted to shed so much evil on his life. He was one of those few men whose literary exertions have merited the liberal gratitude of their country. He was one of the many who never experienced it.

The political circumstances of the Anglo-Saxons having driven the Britons into Wales, and of perpetually warring with them afterwards, created so much hostility and hatred between the two nations, that each undervalued the other, and despised both its language and its literature. When these envenomed feelings abated, the habit of neglect long survived the hostility.

The Welsh language is also peculiar and original. Men who have enjoyed a classical education, pass with ease and pleasantness to French, Italian, or Spanish. But the Welsh is so unlike the other languages of Europe, and its mutations present so many difficulties, or at least the appearance of them, to a learner, that even antiquaries have been, and are, deterred from acquiring it. Interest, ambition, and fame, which have led some to explore the Sanscreet, and the Chinese, have been found so little allied to any proficiency in Welsh knowledge, that even these Syrens have never influenced any to do that justice to Wales, which strange and distant nations have frequently obtained. Welshmen, on the other hand, have been too proud, and too recluse. They did not forgive the seizure of their country, and they despised too much the warriors who acquired and kept it. Hence what Englishmen would not learn Welsh to know, the natives of the principality would not translate.

Better feelings have at last predominated. Some individuals appeared in the last century, who wished the literature of their country to be more diffused. The idea was too novel to be much attended to. A spirit of literary patriotism has begun, however, to diffuse itself, and has reached many individuals, whose exertions have contributed to put the public in possession of the Welsh remains. Among these the gentleman who has nearly published a new Welsh dictionary, who has given us a translation of the poems of Llywarch Hên, who edited those of David ab Gwilym, and the Cambrian Register, and what is still more important, who has essentially contributed to the preservation and notoriety of Welsh literature, by editing, with two other Cambrian patriots, its most ancient and important remains, is well entitled to our praise.

By this publication, entitled "The Myvyrian Archaiology of

Wales, collected out of ancient MSS.,"[1] the public have, for the first time, before them, in a printed form, the Works of the ancient Poets, whose genuineness I hope to vindicate, and those of the succeeding poets, down to the end of the fourteenth century. These occupy the first volume. The second contains their curious historical triads, some genealogies, and historical chronicles. In the third are printed the moral aphorisms ascribed to Cato the wise; the maxims, and old sayings, and proverbs of the Welsh; their triads on the laws of poetry; the triads on naval, political, and intellectual subjects, called the Triads of the Bards of Britain; triads on their most ancient laws; a copy of the laws of Howel-dha, from a MS. of the twelfth century; extracts on their music, and a collection of ancient British music in an obsolete notation. It is stated, that other pieces of their literature will in due time appear. No other nation but the Hebrew can show such a body of ethical and intellectual thought, and of versified composition of the same antiquity.

### THE PROPOSITION, WHICH IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS ESSAY, STATED.

The proposition, which I shall proceed to support, is this: —

"That there are poems now existing in the Welsh, or ancient
"British language, which were written by Aneurin, Taliesin,
"Llywarch Hên, and Merdhin, who flourished between the
"years 500 and 600."

The poems, which have been ascribed to these authors, occupy the first 153 pages of the Welsh Archaiology, and are entitled "The Cynveirdd," or the most ancient Poets.

The great poem of Aneurin is entitled the Gododin. Its subject is the battle of Cattraeth, in which he fought against the Saxons. He was a British chieftain in some part of the North, probably among the Ottadini, in the sixth century. The Saxons conquered in the battle with such slaughter, that Aneurin was one of three who were the only survivors of the distinguished men who led the Britons to the conflict. The poet was afterwards killed treacherously by one Eiddyn.

His poem contains 920 lines, of varied measure, but all rimed. Its object appears to be to commemorate the brave patriots who were engaged in the battle. Another poem on the Months also bears his name; and of two poems, entitled "The Incantation of Maelderw," that in some MSS. have Taliesin's name, it may be doubted if one be not more properly referable to Aneurin.[2]

The poems of Taliesin are on different subjects. The most important are those which concern the battles between the Britons

[1] Printed in 1801, in two volumes, large octavo. The volume of poetry contains 584 pages of double columns. The other, of prose, extends to 628 pages. A third volume has been since published.

[2] See them in Archaiology, pp. 61. and 84. The poem on the Months is after the Gododin, p. 14.

and the Saxons; and these are the poems for whose genuineness I argue. He lived in the sixth century. His principal patron was Urien, king of a little state called Reged, of which the position is not certain. To this king ten poems are devoted, which celebrate his patriotic battles. There are also elegies of Taliesin, on other British warriors, as Owain, the son of Urien, Erewlf, Madawc the Bold, and Erov the Fierce; Aeddon of Mon, Uther Pendragon, and Corroi, the son of Dairy. His other poems are of less value. Some are unintelligible, because full of Bardic or Druidical mysticism, and perhaps some are ascribed to him, of which he was not the author. These, however, may, from internal evidence, and other circumstances, be discriminated by a careful and intelligent critic, well acquainted with the language. All that bear his name have been printed in the Archaiology.

Llywarch Hên lived both in the sixth and seventh centuries. He was a prince of Argoed, in Cumberland. He visited the court of Arthur, and consumed his most vigorous years in opposing the Anglo-Saxons. As they advanced, he took refuge with his surviving children in Powys, and shared in the wars of the hospitable Cynddylan. Most of his poems are of historical utility. One is an elegy on Geraint, a Devonshire leader — another is an elegy on Urien, king of Reged — another on his patron Cynddylan — another on Cadwallon the son of Cadvan. The poem on his own great age, and the fate of his children, who perished in the wars, is very interesting.

Merdhin the Caledonian, also surnamed Wyllt, or the Salvage, has not left much. He was taught by Taliesin, and, of course, lived in the sixth and seventh centuries. His Afallenau, or a Poem on an Orchard, which had been given to him, contains some allusions to the events of his time, which are curious. As this bard had the reputation of a prophet, there are some things ascribed to him which he never wrote, and some which he did write have been interpolated.[1] The dialogue betweeen him and his sister is obviously surreptitious; nor do I accredit all the Hoianau. Judicious criticism will easily detect the spurious poems.

I will now state the course of argument which I shall adopt to prove the proposition above mentioned, and I hope to make it as satisfactory as the case will admit. The reader will, in justice to the subject, recollect its antiquity, and therefore neither expect the unerring precision of mathematical reasoning, nor the accumulation of evidence overpowering doubt, which might be adduced, if the authors in question had been modern poets.

The evidence in favour of any ancient author may be divided into two sorts — The external, and the internal. I shall first consider

### THE EXTERNAL EVIDENCE.

I will begin this by mentioning,

1st, The old MSS. which now exist of these poems, and then show,

[1] Giraldus expressly states this — his words will be quoted presently.

2dly, That these poems, or some of them, and their authors, have been mentioned, or alluded to, by a series of bards, whose works still exist undisputed, from before the twelfth century, to a recent period.

These facts will show that they are at least no modern forgery, and that they were in existence in the twelfth century. The question will then become this—Were these poems existing genuinely in the twelfth century, or were they then forged?

To decide this great question, it will be important to inquire,

3dly, If there were any bards among the Britons in the sixth century; and,

4thly, If such bards as Aneurin, Taliesin, Llywarch Hên, and Merdhin then existed.

If we shall find that the Britons had bards so early, and in particular these individual bards, we shall have gained one step in our researches, and this step will not be an inconsiderable one.

But as the question will turn on the probability of these bards leaving MSS. as well as on their existence, it will be necessary to consider,

5thly, If any writing of a century so remote as the sixth has come down to us.

6thly, If the Britons had then the art of writing.

7thly, If the writing of any other Briton of this period, whose genuineness is undisputed, has come down to us.

Should these questions be satisfactorily answered in the affirmative, another step in our progress will be gained. If the genuine composition of any other Briton of this age has survived to us, so might the works of these British bards.

I think I shall make a third advance, if I show, from incontrovertible authority,

8thly, That in the twelfth century there were writings of old British bards extant, which were *then* called *ancient.*

This chain of proofs appears to me to make the external evidence as strong as the case will admit. I submit that we receive the poems of Homer as genuine, on a degree of external evidence not more satisfactory.

I presume that I shall have acquired at least a right to say, that after this series of facts in favour of these poems, nothing but their internal evidence counteracting them can warrant us in discrediting them. On

THEIR INTERNAL EVIDENCE,

I will endeavour to state,

1st, That the subjects of this poetry could answer no purpose of interest in the twelfth century.

2dly, That their subjects were the most unlikely of all others for a forger to have chosen.

3dly, That Arthur is spoken of in a manner inconsistent with the supposition of forgery.

4thly, That the subjects are such as, if genuine, might be expected from their real authors.

5thly, That the language is not obvious to modern Welshmen, and has therefore an important feature of the language of the times to which they pretend.

6thly, That their historical allusions are true.

7thly, That the manners they express are consistent.

8thly, That the form and composition of the poems suit the period.

I shall then attempt to answer the main objections, which have been urged against them; and conclude with showing that the forgery could not have been practised without detection, in those times; that there is nothing extraordinary in the fact, which this essay is directed to substantiate, that these poems are attested by an unvaried stream of national belief, and that any scepticism about them has been of recent origin.

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## I. "THE OLD MANUSCRIPTS NOW EXISTING OF THESE POEMS."

If there had been no ancient MSS. of this poetry to have produced, it would not alone have been a conclusive argument against it, because the ancient MSS. are usually superseded by subsequent transcripts, and because men often admit works to be genuine, without possessing very ancient MSS. of them. Of the numerous Greek and Latin works, which we possess, how few are there of which very ancient MSS. can be adduced!

Time and accident consume MSS. as well as buildings and men. Old copies decay or are lost, and new ones succeed. When families die, their libraries become dispersed, and many a MS. and book, which were once hoarded as treasures, have mouldered on stalls, or have been used as waste paper. Sons very often inherit neither the taste nor the knowlege of their fathers; and they who squander the estates of their ancestors, are not very likely to be careful of their books.

A great curiosity has, in the last century, been cherished for the oldest MSS. of authors. In former times, however, there was no such anxiety to preserve ancient transcripts. Some MSS. were preferred to others for the costliness of their decorations, and some for the beauty of the writing; but the mere age was not in former times particularly appreciated. Even they who valued the authors they preserved, were not aware of the importance of the earliest MSS.; because when no one dreamt of doubting the genuineness of a work, they would make no provisions for proving it to a future generation.

It is therefore a matter of pure chance, that any ancient MS. of a book has descended to us.

We should be somewhat surprised, if we inquired minutely into the evidence on which we accredit the genuineness of the numerous ancient authors of Greece and Rome, because in many cases we should find, that as far as antiquity of MSS. was concerned, it is very slight. I believe that we have in no case the MSS. actually penned by the author, scarcely any in the author's time, and very few within two or three centuries after him. We have often adopted the title of the MSS. we have found, and have ascribed them to the authors whose names were prefixed. In some of the most celebrated, we can attest the genuineness by a series of quotations and allusions of succeeding ages. In many we only find notices that such authors wrote on such topics. Several have been received without either of these protections. And yet we have generally admitted them to be genuine, and laugh at the extravagance of Hardouin, who rashly pronounced the classics to be modern forgeries.

The fact which I have urged, that these poems have passed in Wales from age to age unquestioned, operates against the existence of many ancient MSS. They could not have anticipated doubt in a case where they neither had any, nor heard of any; and could not therefore have provided against it by carefully hoarding the most ancient MSS. for their posterity to produce. The doubt, however, having been raised in our times, there can be no question but that the old MSS. now remaining will be henceforward very anxiously preserved.

There is another reason why old MSS. cannot be expected to abound in Wales. This is, that for so confined a district, it has been very often the object of military spoil. It was invaded and ravaged by many Anglo-Saxon kings. It had mourned the depredations of the Irish, and still more of the North-men. Our Harold renewed their distresses in the angriest form before the Norman conquest. It suffered under William and the other Norman kings; and no one can forget the conquest of Edward the First. Welsh history abounds with civil feuds, and their correspondent ruin. The destruction of the superb library at Raglan Castle occurred in the time of Cromwell, and many other libraries were dispersed or destroyed.

Yet notwithstanding these losses, there are two, if not three ancient MSS. extant, which have no appearance of having been written later than the twelfth century. One of these is the Black Book of Caermarthen, which, with the other, is now in the library at Hengurt, in Merionethshire. There is also another MS. in the Red Book of Hergest in Jesus College, Oxford, which seems to have been written in the fourteenth century.

The MSS. in the library at Hengurt are described by Lhwyd in his Archæologia Britannica, published 1707.

Mr. Lhwyd says, that the library of Hengurt, collected in the reign of Charles the First by that learned and candid antiquary Robert Vaughan, of Hengurt, esquire, consists of about seventy

old MSS. on parchment, and a considerable number of others on paper.

"The oldest MSS. I saw at Hengurt, is y Lhyvyr dy o Gaer Vyrdhyn, or the Black Book of Caermarthen. It is a quarto of fifty-four leaves, containing poems of the sixth century, by Myrdhyn Wyllt, Taliesin, Llywarch Hên, and Elaeth. The former part of this book is in a large fair character, and seems considerably older than the latter, and the latter might possibly have been transcribed by that noted Bard Cyndhelu Brydydh Mawr, or at least in his time, which was about the year 1160. I am sensible Dr. Davies places this poet ninety years later; but in this MS. fol. 52., I find he writes an elegy on the death of Madog ab Mredydh, Prince of Powys, which was in the year 1158."—P. 225.

That Lhwyd is correct in placing Cyndhelu about 1160 there can be no doubt. His poems prove it.

In another part of his catalogue, he expresses himself in Welsh of this same MS. what may be literally translated thus:

"The Black Book of Caermarthen, a volume of fifty-four leaves quarto, parchment, in the library of Mr. Vaughan, at Hengurt. The first half of this seems to have been written in a very ancient large hand. The rest is in a later hand, but ancient."[1] He then specifies its contents. Among these are the principal poems of Merdhin and Llywarch Hên, with some of Taliesin. The more recent hand-writing comes in at fol. 45.

From those who have lately inspected this MS. I understand that the first part is written like prose, without the distinctions of the poetical lines, which is a mark of its antiquity. The Welsh Archaiology enables me to give the reader a specimen of this, as the editors have printed some pages out of it with exactness. It is in a large hand.

Gogonedauc argluit
hanpich guell. Athue
dicco de egluis. achagell A
kagell. ac egluis. A vast-
ad. a diffuis. A. Teir fin-
haun yssit. Due uch guit.
ac un uch eluit. A. yris-
gaud ar dit. A. siric ap'
wit, Athuendiguiste aw-
raham pen fit. A. Vuchet
tragiuit. A. adar aguen-
en. A. attpaur a dien.[2]

It requires some attention to distinguish the lines and their rimes, which are these:

Gogonedauc argluit hanpich guell
Ath uedicco de egluis achagell.
A. kagell ac egluis
A. vastad a diffuis

[1] P. 261. [2] Archaiology, p. 575.

A. Teir finhaun yssit
Due uch guit
Ac un uch eluit
A. yris gaud ar dit
A. siric ap' wit
Ath uendiguiste awraham pen fit
A. Vuchet tragiuit
A. adar aguenen
A. attpaur a dieu.

The first part, by the style of writing, seems, as I am informed, to be the production of the tenth century, or thereabouts. The latter part resembles in the hand-writing other MSS. which are known to have been written in the time of Cyndhelu, who flourished in the middle of the twelfth century.

Another ancient MS. in this library, Lhwyd concisely mentions under the title of "The Book of Taliesin,"[1] because it contains most of his poems. It is a parchment MS. The writing is ancient. I have not myself seen it, but I am assured that it has the appearance of a MS. of the twelfth century. From the report which I have heard of the liberality of its present proprietor, Colonel Griffith Howel Vaughan, I believe I do not err in stating, that no gentleman, whose curiosity should lead him to Hengurt, would be refused the liberty of seeing these two curious MSS.

In the time of Lhwyd there was another ancient MS. in this library, which he entitles "The Book of Aneurin."[2] It was an octavo, and contained the Gododin, and some other poems ascribed to Aneurin.

This was also in parchment, and I am informed had the appearance of a MS. of the twelfth century. It continued in the Hengurt library from the days of Lhwyd to our time, but within the last twenty years has disappeared from it. I will presume that it has been only borrowed, and that it will be honourably returned to the collection at Hengurt.

The Red Book of Hergest is still in the library of Jesus College, at Oxford. Lhwyd says that it is in parchment, in folio, containing 465 leaves[3]; that it exhibits antiquities of various kinds, and was written at the end of the fourteenth century.[4] It contains the poems of Llywarch Hên, some of Merdhin, and Taliesin, besides many poems of the following centuries.[5]

[1] Lhwyd. Arch. p. 261. [2] Lhwyd. ib. p. 254.

[3] According to the account of a gentleman who inspected this MS. in 1783, Lhwyd has stated the pages inaccurately. This gentleman's remark is, "Y Llyfr Coch is a folio, containing 360 leaves, 720 pages, and 1440 columns."

[4] Pp. 254. and 261.

[5] It also contains three Welsh chronicles, an ancient Welsh grammar, and some Welsh romances, as Buchedd Carlemain, of Charlemagne Ystori Bown (or Bevis), o Hamtwn, Ystor i Cilydd fab Celyddon Wledig, or the History of Cilydd, son of King Celyddon, Ystori Efrauc Iarll y Gogledd, or the History of Efrauc, Earl of the North, Ystori Gereint fab Erbin, or the History of Gereint, the son of Erbin. The Mabinogi, or original Welsh tales, and the Ystori y Seithwyr Doethion, or the History of the Seven Wise Men. It has also the ancient Welsh medical treatise called Meddygon Myddfai, and the Triads, entitled Trioedd Ynys Prydain.

In the Hengurt library are two more recent transcripts of these old poems, which may be also mentioned. One MS. was written by Sir Hugh Pennant, in the time of Henry VIII. It contains the poems of Merdhin and many others.[1]

Another copious transcript, entitled "Y Kynveirdh Cymreig, or the Ancient Welsh Bards," was written by Mr. Robert Vaughan, in the time of Charles I. It contains the Gododin; most of Taliesin's songs; those of Llywarch, and some others.[2]

There is another transcript, called Kutta Kyvarwydh.[3]

In noticing these MSS. I am only stating the contents of the Hengurt library, and of the one at Jesus College. There are many other Welsh collections which contain MSS. or transcripts of these ancient poems, of various ages before and since the fourteenth century. The Welsh MSS. in the library of the Earl of Macclesfield are not yet known. They were collected by the Rev. Moses Williams, who left them to Mr. William Jones, the father of the late celebrated Sir William Jones. Mr. Jones bequeathed them to the late Earl of Macclesfield, but they have not been yet allowed to be publicly inspected.

As they who wish to investigate the subject of the MSS. more closely may desire to know the best places for their research, I will refer them to the "General Advertisement" to the Welsh Archaiology, which contains a statement of the principal collections, not of these bards only, but of all the Welsh literature.

I do not propose this work to be a vindication of all the poems that have been generally attributed to Aneurin, Taliesin, Merdhin, or Llywarch Hên, or promiscuously published as theirs. My object is to authenticate the genuineness of such of them as I think beyond all dispute; and they are the following:

Of Aneurin.

The Gododin.

Of Llywarch Hên.

The Elegy on Geraint ab Erbin.
Ditto on Urien Reged.
Ditto on Cynddylan.
Ditto on Cadwallon.
The Poem on his old age.
Ditto to Maenwyn.
Ditto to the Cuckoo.

Of Merdhin.

The Avallenau.

Of Taliesin.

The Poems to Urien, and on his battles.
His Dialogue with Merdhin.
The Poems on Elphin.
And his Historical Elegies.

[1] Lhwyd, 256. [2] Ibid. 258. [3] 257.

In selecting the above, I do not mean to insinuate that some others, which are ascribed to these authors, may not be genuine likewise. I am satisfied that some are not genuine, and that some have been interpolated. There are several others, however, especially of Taliesin, which may be genuine. But I conceive that the question which presses is, not whether this or that poem is to be accredited, because a simpler investigation of its evidences might determine that, if a given number had been already admitted, but whether there are *any* which ought to be placed in an age so early. The prevailing scepticism denies that there are any genuine poems of the sixth century extant. It asserts, that every Welsh poem, referred by Welshmen to this ancient period, is a factitious composition of the twelfth or succeeding century. My duty, therefore, if I attempt to impugn this scepticism, is to show that there are genuine works of the sixth century now in existence. I adduce the poems above selected as such. If my arguments are successful as to these poems, then any others may be added to the accredited number, which judicious and learned criticism shall allow to be genuine, after due consideration.

Now of the Gododin, I have mentioned, that, until very lately, a MS. of it was in the Hengurt library, which seemed to be of the handwriting of the twelfth century. I am informed that it was in handwriting and appearance very similar to the book of Taliesin, which is yet in the library, and may be seen by any one. A complete transcript of the Gododin was made by Mr. Vaughan, in the time of Charles I., and many copies of it, of various dates, exist in Welsh collections.

The poems of Llywarch Hên, above mentioned, are in the Black Book of Caermarthen, and in the Red Book of Hergest. They are a part of Mr. Vaughan's transcript, and of others.

The Avallenau of Merdhin is in the Black Book of Caermarthen, with others that are ascribed to him. It is in Sir Hugh Pennant's transcript, made in the time of Henry VIII., in the Kutta Kyvaruydh, and in other transcripts.

Of Taliesin, the Dialogue with Merdhin, the Graves of the Warriors, and a few others, are in the Black Book of Caermarthen. Most of those which I have mentioned to be his are, with others in the MS. called the Book of Taliesin, in the Hengurt library, which is placed in the twelfth century, or nearly so. Some are in the Red Book of Hergest, and all are in Mr. Vaughan's transcript, and many in y Kutta Kyvaruydh.

What other ancient MSS. of any of the works of these Bards are in the Macclesfield or other collections, I cannot state, because I am not informed. But I conceive, that from the above statement, I am authorized to affirm, that there are MSS. of poems of these four Bards now extant, which were written in or before the twelfth century. I will confirm this assertion by showing,

II. That these poems, or some of them, and their authors, have been mentioned or alluded to by a series of Bards, whose

works still exist undisputed, from before the twelfth century to a recent period.

There is a poem which bears the same name with one of Taliesin's, but which is attributed to Golyddan. It is called Arymes Prydein Vawr. From its internal evidence, it seems to have been written in the end of the seventh, or in the eighth century. He mentions that the Britons will recover their country again, and adds [1], "Dysgogan Merddin," — Merddin foretells it. This is a direct allusion to that passage of the Avallenau, which we shall hereafter quote, and which Jeffery has imitated. In this passage Merdhin foretells the return of the Britons.

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In an ancient composition, which is usually placed in the tenth century, called Englynion y Clywaid, we find Llywarch quoted as a Bard :

"Hast thou heard what *Llywarch* sang?
(The intrepid and brave old man)
Greet kindly, tho' there be no acquaintance."

A glyweisti a gant Llywarch,
Oedd henwr drud dihavarch :
Onid kyvarwydd cyvar ch.

*Arch. Cynveirdd*, p. 173.

In the same poem we find Taliesin mentioned as a Bard, and his son quoted :

"Hast thou heard what Avaon sang?
(The son of *Taliesin*, whose muse was just.)
The countenance cannot conceal the sorrow of the heart."

A glyweisti a gant Avaon,
Vab Taliesin gerdd gyvion :
Ni chel grudd gystudd calon. P. 173.

None of the poems of Avaon have survived.

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In another of the same poems we find Aneurin incidentally mentioned, and as a Bard :

"Hast thou heard the saying of Kennyd,
The son of *Aneurin*, the well-skilled Bard?
There are none free from care but the provident."

A glyweisti çwedyl Cennyz
Vab Aneurin varz celvyz :
Nid dioval ond dedwyz.

In the same poem, both Taliesin and Merdhin are distinctly specified, and as contemporaries :

"Hast thou heard the saying of *Taliesin*.
In conversation with *Merdhin?*
'It is natural for the indiscreet to laugh immoderately.'"

[1] Welsh Archaiology, p. 156.

A glyweisti çwedyl Taliesin,
Yn ymzizan â Merzin:
Gnawd i anghall traçwerthin.

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In another poem of the same age, or perhaps earlier, we find an obvious allusion to the poem of Aneurin on the battle of Cattraeth:

"Like Cattraeth great and glorious."

Eilywod Gattraeth vaur vygedauc.

*Welsh Arch.* p. 180.

Why was Cattraeth great and glorious? Not from the event, for that was peculiarly disastrous to the Britons; but it was made glorious by the much celebrated poem of Aneurin upon it. Unless we presume this poem to have then existed, the line has no meaning.

These six notices of these ancient Bards are taken from poems which, according to the general consent of the best Welsh critics, were written before the twelfth century.

The allusions to these Bards in the authors of the *twelfth century* are very numerous. There are not fewer than fourteen passages distinctly referring to these Bards, or some of their poems, in the works of the twelfth century. I will produce them as nearly as possible in the order of their chronology.

1. Between the years 1140 and 1172 was Hywel, the son of Owen, of Gwynedh. His father was honoured with some of the best poems of Gwalchmai [1] and Cynddelu [2], the two stars of the Welsh Parnassus; and to his son Hywel, whom I am going to quote, Cynddelu also addressed an ode.[3]

This prince wrote some odes on Love, and some on War. In one, which is entitled Gorhofedh, or his Delights, he mentions Merdhin, and speaks of him as a Bard.

"To construct an ancient or primitive song,
A song of praise, such as *Merdhin sang.*"

Kyssylltu canu kyssevin
Kert volyant val y cant Mertin. *Welsh Arch.* p. 278.

Here the prince explicitly mentions Merdhin, not merely as a Bard, but as one in his days (or in the twelfth century), ancient or primitive. To construct an ancient song, such as Merdhin sang, is, in effect, to say that Merdhin's songs were ancient.

The expressions seem to indicate that Merdhin's poetry existed in his time; for how could he have talked of constructing or putting together a song like Merdhin's, unless some of Merdhin's poetry was in being.

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Cynddelu was a Bard who lived between 1150 and 1200, and whose genius, although various, yet excelled in the bolder strains

[1] Archaiol. p. 196—198. [2] Ibid. 204—207.
[3] Ibid. p. 258.

of heroic poetry. His compositions were numerous. Forty-nine of his pieces have descended to us.

2. In his elegy of Rhiryd, he mentions Taliesin by name, and as a distinguished Welsh Bard. The passage will speak for itself:—

"Whilst there was the solemn feast, and suitable wealth,
To me no one would speak but agreeably;
To me the mild chief intermitted not his numerous gifts;
To me the valiant one made not the two cheeks of disgrace;
The song was not a voice of disgrace to the people of Cynvarch.
"From the head of *Taliesin*, in bardic learning exalted,
A bardic lay shall come to me."

Tra vu vyg kyvet yg kyuoeth yawn,
Nym llauarei y nep nam bei digawn
Nym ditolei y lary o lawer dawn;
Nym goruc deur wr deurut warthlawn:
Ny bu warthlef kert kynverching werin.
O benn Taliesin bartrin beirtrig
Barteir om kyveir.

CYNDDELU, *Marunad Ririd.* p. 230.

3. In another poem, an elegy on Owen of Gwynedh, Cynddelu visibly alludes to the poem of Taliesin on the battle of Argoed Llwyvain:

"Hastening mutually to urge on,
In heroic manner, in the great field so illustrious,
The horned array of the winged warrior
Was the energy, the heroism of Owen.
In the tumult, the leader of slaughter heaps carcasses,
As in the bloody *conflict of Argoed Llwyvain.*"

Yn ebrwyd gyfarwain
Y'gwrfoes yg orfaes cyfrgain
I gornawr gwriawr goradain
Ygwrial ygwryd Owain
Ygorun aergun aergyfrain
Yn aergad yn Argoed Llwyfain.

CYND. *Mar. Ow. Gwyn.* p. 207.

The namesake of the hero of Cynddelu had been praised by Taliesin in his poem on the battle of Argoed Llwyvain on this occasion.

The Britons, under Urien and his son Owen, were invaded by a Saxon leader, whom Taliesin names Flamddwyn. This word literally means *flame-bearing*, and therefore is probably not the real name of the Saxon general, but an angry epithet descriptive of his ravages. Taliesin mentions that he made an insolent demand of hostages and submission from the Britons:

"Flamddwyn demanded with great impetuosity,
Will they give hostages — are they ready?"

Atorelwis Flamddwyn fawr drybestawd:
A ddodynt yngwystlon: a ynt parawd?

TALIESIN, *Gwaith Arg. Ll.* 53.

He then distinguishes the eager courage of Owen, who was the first to give the answer of patriotism to the invaders:

"He was answered by Owen, Let the gash appear—
They will give none—the hostages are not, shall not be ready."

Yr attebwys Owain ddwyrain fossawd
Nid dodynt, nid ydynt, nid ynt parawd.
TALIESIN, *Gwaith Arg. Ll.* 53.

The poet then mentions the furious conflict which followed from this refusal of submission.

Now the compliment which Cynddelu paid to the hero of his elegy, Owen of Gwynedh, by alluding to the battle of Llwyvain, was this: the refusal and defiance to Flamddwyn was given by Owen, the son of Urien; and this spirited conduct produced the celebrated conflict which followed. By comparing the battle of his Owen with that in which the Owen of Taliesin had distinguished himself, Cynddelu appears to have meant to have exalted the character of his own hero, by assimilating it to the merit and celerity of his recorded namesake.

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4. This same author, Cynddelu, also alludes in another place to the poem of Taliesin on the battle of Argoed Llwyvain:

"He hurried on impetuously to the assault like the flame-spreading Flamddwyn."

Ffwyr ffysgiad fal ffleimiad Flamddwyn.
CYND. *Dadol. Rhys.* 235.

Who was this Flamddwyn? It has been already mentioned that it is the descriptive name of the Saxon hero in the poem of Taliesin, on the battle of Argoed Llwyvain; and it is remarkable that he is distinguished by Taliesin for the circumstance, to illustrate which his name is here introduced.

The point of the simile is the hurrying to the attack—he hurried impetuously to it like Flamddwyn. Now when Taliesin mentions Flamddwyn, it is with the same circumstance of impetuosity and haste: thus, when he first mentions him, he says,

Dygrysowys Flamddwyn.
"Flamddwyn *hastened quickly*"

to his hostile object.

When he mentions him again, he says,

Atorelwis Flamddwyn fawr drybestawd.
"Flamddwyn demanded with *great impetuosity*."

It seems that Cynddelu introduced the simile of Flamddwyn from recollecting this poem and these expressions of Taliesin.

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5. Cynddelu also mentions Merdhin. I will quote the passage at length, that the reader may have some idea of the manner of

these Welsh Bards. The subject of the poem from which this extract is made is the death of Owen. The poem is an elegy on the death, the effect of which, on many, he now proceeds to describe:

"On the progeny of Run lie the red earth and stones:
Ominous, not glad tidings, was the fate of the Chief:
It is an omen of the pain of agitated terror,
To the finger from the splendour of the palace,
To the minstrels whose request was for *slender coursers*.[1]
But to the crimsoned wolf of terror, and to the ravens, it was a boon.
Frequently it will come to the memory of the profound Bards;
To Cynddelu it forbodes delay to his claims of honour.
Of the honour'd sovereign — the armour of the host of raging slaughter —
Of Owen, God has determined the day;
Of the venerated head appropriately predominating in Britain.
Thus in the conflict of Arderydd, wrath stalked through the battle,
Amid ruin and falling slaughter
Over myriads of men, over *Merdhin*, who was illustrious."

Ar hîl Run rud weryd a main
Y dragon coeling nid coelfain ei dwyn
Ys coel brwyn braw dilain
I gerdawr a'm preidiawr a'm prain
I eilwyon am eirchion archfain
I flaid rud i fraw fud i frain
I feird dwfn dyf yd a gofiain
I Gyndelw oed ardelw urdain
Urd Wledig llnrig llu aergrain
Urdws Duw diwyrnawd Owain
Urdawl ben priawdnen Prydain
Mal gwaith Arderyd gwyth ar dyrfain cad
In argrad yn aergrain
Uch myrd wyr uch Myrdhin oed cain.

*Mar. Ow. Gwyn.* 207.

He goes on to describe the motions of the birds of prey on the battle, which I will add for its strong imagery:

"Over the hawk's station, over the hawk's banquet of heads,
Over the quivering of the spears reddening was the wing.
Over the howling of the storm the course of the seagull was manifest.
Over the blood whirling, the blood flowing, the exulting ravens were screaming.

[1] Literally "for the *slender-bodied ones*." The Welsh poetry has frequently instances of descriptive adjectives being used to express noun substantives. Thus the Bards sometimes put *meinir* for a charming woman. The word literally means any thing slender and lively. For the same interesting object, they have also the compound eilîw-manod, or "resembling in mien the light driven snow."

Over the blood gushing, over the treasure of the fierce-wing'd race,
Was the clamour of the apt energy, aptly spreading thro' the sky."

Uch gwalchlan uch gwalchlad pennain
Uch gwayw ryn yn rudaw adain
Uch gwaed gwynt golau hynt gwylain
Uch gwaed lyry gwaedlanw gwaedai gigfrain
Uch gwaed frau uch adnau ednain
Yg gawr huysgwr huysgain yn wybyr.
*Mar. Ow. Gwyn.* 207.

In this passage we see Merdhin mentioned as being illustrious or splendid, and as having been in the battle of Arderydd. Now Merdhin the Bard was in this battle; and why was he particularized with the epithet "illustrious?" The poem, already quoted, of Howel explains it. It was the effect of his bardic fame.

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6. Another princely Bard was Owen Cyveilioc. He flourished between 1150 and 1197. He was the prince of Powys. He was engaged in some intestine conflicts with Howel[1]; he fought with our Henry, and at last excited against himself Owen of Gwynedd, the hero of the poetry of Gwalchmai and Cynddelu. This hero defeated and expelled Owen Cyveilioc in 1166 from Powys, to which, however, he was readmitted.

This Owen of Powys has written a very interesting poem called "Hîrlas," or the Blue long Horn; and in this we meet with an undeniable allusion to the poem of Aneurin on the battle of Cattraeth. The poem is given in English among Evans's specimens[2]; but as his translation is too free to suit the severity of documents for accurate reasoning, I will turn it into more literal English.

After speaking of Madawc and Meilir, as "men habituated to tumult," as "the shields of their army," "the teachers of battle," he suddenly introduces,

"Hear how with their portion of mead, went with their Lord to Cattraeth
Faithful the purpose of their sharp weapons,
The host of Mynydauc, to their fatal rest.
They obtained the recording, tho' pernicious to their active leader.
They did not, like my warriors in the hard struggle of Maelor,
Liberate the prisoner, yet their praise has been established."

Kigleu am dal met myned dreig Kattraeth
Kywir eu harvaeth arveu lliveid
Gosgort Vynytawc am eu cysgeid
Kawssant y hadrawt cas vlawt vleineid
Ni wnaeth a wnaeth vynghedwyr ynghalet Vaelor
Dillwng karcharor dullest voleid. *Hirlas Euein*, 266.

[1] See Wynne's History of Wales, 187.
[2] P. 7. See it better translated in Southey's Madoc.

I think that this passage affords very satisfactory testimony to the existence of the Gododin at this period, even though Aneurin's name is not here mentioned.

My reasons for the opinion are these:

1. The prince alludes to the warriors who went with Mynydauc to Cattraeth, as having drank their mead. Now the great topic perpetually recurring in the Gododin is, that the Britons lost the battle of Cattraeth, and suffered so severely because they had drank their mead too profusely. The passages in the Gododin, on this point, are numerous; for example,

"Men went to Cattraeth; loquacious were their hosts:
Pale mead had been their feast, and was their poison."

Gwyr aeth Gattraeth oed ffraeth y lu
Glasved eu hancwyn ae gwenwyn vu.
ANEURIN, *Gododin*, p. 2.

"They had drank together the sparkling mead by the light of rushes:
Pleasant was its taste, long was its woe."

Cyt yven vedd gloew wrth liw babir
Cyt vei da ei vlas y gas bu hir. *Gododin*, p. 3.

"In fair order round the banquet they feasted together;
Wine, mead, and mirth they enjoyed."

Gloyw ddull y am drulyt gytvaethant
Gwin a mel a mal amuesant. Ibid. p. 9.

2. The prince mentions that the Britons went to Cattraeth under the conduct of Mynydauc, their leader, and he calls them Gosgordd Mynydauc, the host of Mynydauc. Now Aneurin, in many places, mentions Mynydauc as the leader of the Britons, and in no fewer than five places uses the very phrase to express them, which Owen selects as if borrowing from him. I mean Gosgordd Mynydauc. Thus Aneurin said,

"The warriors went to Cattraeth with the dawn;
They strove in the flight daringly;
Eleven hundred and three hundred were hurling
Drenched in blood; they were vehement in the darting of the lance:
They stationed themselves with manly gallantry
From the host of Mynydauc the courteous.
The warriors went to Cattraeth with the dawn,
Confident in exposing themselves to their inevitable fate:
They had drank the yellow, sweet ensnaring mead.
Merry had been the hours, merry the singers;
Red became their swords and plumage,
Their white shining blades, and square helmets,
From the host of Mynydauc the courteous."

Gwyr a haeth Gattraeth gan wawr
Travodynt yn hed yn hovnawr

Milcant a thrychant a em daflawr
Gwyarllyt a gwynodynt waeulawr
Ef gorsaf eng gwriaf eng guriawr
Rac *Gosgordd Mynydawc* mwynvawr.
Gwyr a aeth Gattraeth gan vawr
Dygymyrrus eu hoet eu hangenawr
Med yvynt melyn melys maglawr
Blwydyn bu llewyn llawen cerdawr
Coch eu cledyfaur na phlwawr
Eu llain gwynygalch a phedryolet benawr
Rac *Gosgord Mynydawr* mwyn vawr.

*Gododin*, p. 2.

The Gosgordd Mynydauc, and the sad effects of the mead, are mentioned by Aneurin again:

" The warriors had hastened swift all running together;
Short were their lives drunk over the distilled mead.
The host of Mynydauc abounding with gold were in distress.
The price of their banquet of mead was their lives."

Gwyr a gryssiasant buant gytneit
Hoedlvyrion medduon uch med hidleit
*Gosgordd Vynyddawc* eurawc yn rheit
Gwerth eu gwledd o vedd vu eu heneit. Ibid. p. 6.

Aneurin mentions the Gosgordd Mynydauc twice more, as,

" Of the host of Mynydauc none escaped,
Except one weapon altogether weak and precipitated."

O Osgordd Vynyddawc ni ddiangwys
Namyn un aryf amddiphyrf amddiffwys. Ibid. p. 11.

And,

" From Cattraeth their army was loquacious,
Of the host of Mynydawr, great in misery,
Of three hundred, but one man came out;
From the wine-feast; from the mead-feast they had hastened."

Rac Cattraeth oedd ffraeth eu llu
O osgordd Vynyddawr vawr dru
O drychant namyn un gwr ny ddyvu
O winveith a meddveith est gryssiasant. Ibid. p. 9.

3. When to the above remark it is added that the prince of Powys says this tribe of Mynydauc had "obtained a recording," and that their praise was established, can we doubt that he spoke of the Gododin of Aneurin, and had taken from it the allusion, which has been cited from him. In the Gododin, these unfortunate Britons have obtained a recording, and their mead is distinctly mentioned as the cause of their calamity. Hence I consider this passage in Owen's poem as a satisfactory testimony of the existence of the Gododin in his time. The prince has

also a line in his poem which is so similar to one in the Gododin as to warrant the supposition that it was borrowed from it:

Nid yn hyn dihyll nam hen deheu.

The line in the Gododin is this:

Ni bu hil dihyll na hen deheu.

Before I dismiss the prince of Cyveilioc, I cannot but crave permission to mention a very interesting and original elegiac turn which occurs in his poem of the Hirlas.

The prince was a turbulent warrior, generally fighting with some of his neighbours. His Hirlas, however, shows that he possessed a strong poetic genius, and applied it to celebrate the warriors who accompanied him in his quarrels. The plan of the poem is ingenious and picturesque. He fancies himself surrounded by his chiefs at the festive table, rejoicing in their victory; and he orders his cupbearer to pour out the generous beverage to those whom he intends to celebrate, and whom he selects and describes successively. Two of his accustomed companions and favourite warriors were Moreiddig and Tudyr, who had just perished in a preceding battle. In the ardour of his festivity and panegyric, he forgot that they were no more. Therefore, after directing the horn of mead to be sent to his warriors, and after addressing each of them with appropriate praise, he proceeds to send it to Moreiddig and Tudyr. He recites their merit — he turns to greet them — but their place is vacant — he beholds them not — he hears their dying groan — he recollects their fate — his triumphant strains cease — his hilarity flies, and the broken tones of mournful exclamation suddenly burst out. Shall I be pardoned if I digress awhile to insert the passage in a close translation.

To enhance the compliment which he is going to pay, he threatens death to his cup-bearer if he execute his office unskilfully.

" Fill, cup-bearer, seek not death —
Fill the horn of honour at our banquets,
The long blue horn, of high privilege, of ancient silver,
That covers it not sparingly;
Bear to Tudyr, eagle of slaughter,
A prime beverage of florid wine.
Thy head shall be the forfeit if there come not in
The most delicious mead
To the hand of Moreiddig, encourager of songs;
May they become old in fame before they leave us!
Ye blameless brothers of aspiring souls,
Of dauntless ardour that would grasp ev'n fire;
Heroes, what services ye have achieved for me!
Not old disgustingly, but old in skill;
Unwearied, rushing wolves of battle;
First in the crimsoned rank of bleeding pikes,
Brave leaders of the Mochnantians, from Powys,
The prompt ones, in every need,

Who rescue their borders from violence,
Praise is your meed, most amiable pair!
Ha! — the cry of death — And do I miss them —
O Christ! — how I mourn their catastrophe —
O lost Moreiddig — how greatly shall I need thee!"

*Hirlas Euein*, p. 266.

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7. In the same century, from the year 1160 to 1220, lived the bard LLYWARCH AB LLYWELYN, or as he has been most commonly called, Llywarch Prydyd y Moch. He has left thirty-two poems.

In one of his odes to the son of Iorwerth, this bard mentions Taliesin as a bard, and also a circumstance, which is the subject of one of Taliesin's poems, to which therefore Llywarch P. y Moch must be supposed to be alluding. The words of Llywarch are:

"I will address my Lord
With the greatly greeting muse,
With the dowry of Cyridwen,
The ruler of Bardism,
In the manner of Taliesin
When he liberated Elphin
When he overshaded the bardic mystery
With the banners of the bards.

Cyvarchaf ym ren
Cyvarchvawr awen
Cyvreu Kyridwen
Rhwyf bartoni
Yn dull Taliesin
Yn dillwng Elfin
Yn dyllest bartin
Beirt vanyeri.

LLYWEL. *y Canu Bychan*, 303.

The poem of Taliesin, which he wrote to obtain Elphin's release from the prison where his uncle Maelgwn had confined him, yet exists. It is called the Mead Song. It has considerable merit, and may be thus faithfully translated:

## TALIESIN'S MEAD SONG.

"I will implore the Sovereign, Supreme in every region,
The Being who supports the heavens, Lord of all space,
The Being who made the waters, to every body good;
The Being who sends every gift and prospers it,
That Maelgwn of Mona be inspired with mead, and cheer us with it
From the mead horns — the foaming, pure and shining liquor
Which the bees provide, but do not enjoy..
Mead distilled I praise — its eulogy is every where,

Precious to the creature whom the earth maintains.
God made it for man for his happiness;
The fierce and the mute, both enjoy it.
The Lord made both the wild and the gentle,
And has given them clothing for ornament,
And food and drink to last till judgment.
I will implore the Sovereign, Supreme in the land of peace,
To liberate Elphin from banishment,
The man that gave me wine, ale, and mead,
And the great princely steeds of gay appearance,
And to me yet would give as usual:
With the will of God, he would bestow from respect
Innumerable festivities in the course of peace.
Knight of Mead, relation of Elphin, distant be thy period of inaction." *Arch.* p. 22.

Golychaf wledig pendefig pob wa
Gwr a gynneil y nef Arglwydd pob tra
Gwr a wnaeth y dwfr i bawb yn dda
Gwr a wnaeth pob llad ac ai llwdda
Meddwer Maelgwn Mon ag an meddwa
Ai feddgorn ewyn gwerlyn gwymha
As gynnull gwenyn ac nis mwynha
Med hidleid moleid molud i bob tra
Lleaws creadur a fag terra
A wnaeth Duw i ddyn er ei ddonha
Rhaidrud rhai mud ef ai mwynha
Rhai gwyllt rhai dof Dofydd ai gwna
Yn dillig iddynt yn dillad ydd a
Yn fwyd yn ddiawd hyd frawd yd barha
Golychaf i wledig pendefig gwlad hedd
I ddillwng Elphin o alltudedd
Y gwr am rhoddes y gwin ar cwrwf ar medd
Ar meirch mawr modur mirein eu gwedd
Am rothwy etwa mal y diwedd
Trwy fodd Duw y rhydd trwy enrhydedd
Pump pemhwnt calan ynghaman hedd
Elffinawg farchawg medd hwyr dy ogledd.
Taliesin, *Canu y medd*, p. 22.

Taliesin wrote two other poems concerning Elphin which are yet extant. One called "The Consolation of Elphin;" the other entitled "To the Wind;" but I think the Mead Song was the poem which Llywarch P. y Moch had in his contemplation when he said he would address the Lord, like Taliesin, to liberate Elphin, because the very phrase used by Llywarch in speaking of this poem, "yn dillwng Elphin," "to liberate Elphin," is in the Mead Song.

8. Nor is this all the inference to be deduced from this poem of Llywarch's. The first four lines of Llywarch will be found on a comparison so nearly similar to four commencing lines of another

poem of Taliesin, that I think no one can dispute that he borrowed them from Talien.

| Llywarch. | Taliesin. |
|---|---|
| Cyvarchaf ym ren | *Kyvarchaf im Rhen* |
| Cyvarchvawr awen | Ystyriav *Awen* |
| Cyvreu Kyridwen | Py ddyddwg angen |
| Rwyf bartoni. | Cyn no *Chyridwen.* |
| " I will address the Lord | " I will address the Lord |
| With the greatly greeting Muse, | With the meditating Muse, |
| With the dowry of Cyridwen, | That endured necessity |
| The ruler of Bardism." | Before Cyridwen." [1] |

The first line, and part of the second, are exactly the same in both. The singular idea in the other lines proves the intentional imitation of Llywarch P. Moch. To speak of Cyridwen, a mythological personage very little mentioned elsewhere, could not have happened to both in an introduction so very similar both in metre and words, unless the one had borrowed it from the other. I therefore submit that this imitation of Llywarch attests that this poem of Taliesin, called "The Mab Gyvreu Taliesin," was in being in Llywarch's time. I think also, by Llywarch mentioning Taliesin, and alluding to another poem of his immediately after this imitation of him, that it warrants the assertion, according to the experienced laws of the association of ideas, that Llywarch deemed the lines he was imitating to be Taliesin's. If so, this single passage is evidence that the Mead Song, and the Mab Gyvreu of Taliesin, were existing and accredited as his in the twelfth century.

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9. Llywarch P. Moch, in this same poem, gives also an attestation of Merdhin; he says,

" Merdhin prophesied
That a king would come
From the Cymry nation,
Out of the oppressed.
Druids declared,
That liberality shall be renewed
From the progeny of the eagles
Of Snowdon."

Darogan Mertin
Dyvod breyenhin
O Gymry werin
O gamh wri

[1] Cyridwen means literally, "the producing woman." She is one of the beings peculiar to the ancient Welsh mythology, and appears to have been considered by the Bards as the productress of things; in a word, to have borne that character, which Lucretius gives to Venus in his introduction to his De Naturâ Rerum. There are several mythological personages mentioned in ancient Welsh literature, who are worth attending to, because in them we perhaps see some curious remains of the earliest traditions of the western parts of Europe.

Dywawd derwyton
Dadeni haelon
O hil eryron
O Eryri. Ll. *Canu Bych.* 304.

This prediction of Merdhin's, of better fortune to Wales, was also noticed by Golyddan, whom we have quoted before. The passage now existing in Merdhin's Avallenau, to which these bards seem to have alluded, will be presently adduced.

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10. The same bard has also the following allusion to the Gododin of Aneurin:

"Like Caeawg the foremost hero ministering to the birds of prey."

Adar weinidawc Caeawc cynran drud. P. 298.

Caeawg is much celebrated in the Gododin, and is several times mentioned there with epithets expressing the same quality as Llywarch in this passage intends to denote. This quality was his eagerness to be the foremost in the battle, which Aneurin signifies by cynhaiawc and cynhorawc, and Llywarch by cynran; all the three adjectives are nearly synonymous.

As Llywarch P. Moch was one of the most distinguished poets of the twelfth century, it may relieve this tedious detail if I intermix a specimen of his mode of describing a battle. Battles were the favourite transactions of that age, and therefore engrossed most of the bardic lays. They are usually noticed with some original touches, which to us who are nurtured in a happier state of intellect and society will seem horrible and disgusting. How much is it to be regretted that the melioration of our taste should be so distinct from the amendment of our conduct!

"Melancholy it is to us, the bards of the world, that earth lies upon him:
Sorrow is over us:
He was our leader before the wrath of fate separated us.
The ravagers ravaged onwards with fury;
Dreadful was the crimson gushing from the men before so mild:
Dead was the greatest part in the tumult.
Of the various coloured waves, broken was the sound of their roar:
They were not silent;
A briny wave [1], extensive from exerting rage;
Another wave, fierce of red gore.
When the leader of the glittering hosts overcame
Llewelyn, the chief of wide-spreading Alun.
A myriad was slain — the lure of the ravens incessantly screaming —

[1] The scene of this conflict was the strait of the Menai, which separates Anglesey from the main land.

All warriors — and a thousand in captivity
When we passed from Porth Aethwy.
On the steeds of the sea flood over the great tumult of the waves
There were thronging spears — awful was their fury —
Conspicuous was the red rippling blood —
Terrible was our onset — it was unlovely —
It was misery — it was death unparalleled:
It was a doubt to the world, if there were left
A residue of us for the dissolution of age."

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11. Gwynvardd Brycheiniawg flourished between 1160 and 1220. He has left us two small poems, one addressed to the Lord Rhys, the prince of South Wales [1], the other to St. David.

In the one addressed to Rhys, he quotes Merdhin thus, p. 270.

" For Tegeingyl, for the land of the angles thronging together
For the fellow brother of Medrawd, of whom *Merdhin* prophesied."

Am Degeingyl, am dir Eingyl yn ymdyrru
Am gydvrawd Medrawd Merdhin darogan.

Gwyn. Br. p. 269.

Merdhin is here mentioned as prophesying of Medrawd. If we turn to his Avallenau, we shall find that he there so speaks of Medrawd:

" Sweet apple-tree, conspicuous as the hill of our congress
Towering above the wood surrounding its roots unshaded!
I will prophesy the coming again
Of Medrawd and Arthur, the sovereign of the host,
As at Camlan, preparing to conflict."

Asallen beren bren eil wyddsa
Cwn coed cylch ei gwraidd digwascotva;
A mi ddysgoganas dyddaw etwa
Medrawd ac Arthur modur tyrfa
Camlann darmerthan difieu yna.

Myrd. *Avall.* p. 153.

I submit, that when the passage of Gwynvardd is compared with this of Merdhin, it will seem probable that this part of the Avallenau was alluded to by Gwynvarrd, and consequently that the Avallenau was in existence in his time.

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12. Elidir Sais lived between 1160 and 1220. Eleven of his poems are preserved. In his Dadolwch, or atonement to Llywelyn, the son of Iorwerth, he mentions both Taliesin and Merdhin by name, and speaks of their poetry as being an object of *sight*, consequently existing.

This passage is certainly important, and if the lines were to be cited by themselves, they would be found to express the id a I

[1] Wynne's History, p. 193.

have suggested. But the true sense of any passage depends sometimes on the other parts with which it is connected. Now it is proper that I should state that the part in which these few lines occur is obscure, and of difficult construction. But as it can answer no honourable purpose to lay before the reader a delusion, where he expects a proof, I will translate the whole poem of Elidir Sais, as literally as possible, and leave it to his own judgment to decide the force of the evidence, which, in my opinion, implies an inspection of existing works:

" Natural is the quaffing of the clear bright wine
From the horn of the buffalo,
From the fold of the Bugle:
Natural is the singing of the cuckoo in the beginning of the summer,
Natural is the increasing growth of the springing blade:
Natural to the wise is his intellectual wealth;
But not natural, not tranquil is it to be sorrowful.

" Regret has done me great injury
For the brothers of dignity, the best men of the west;
Brothers separated in lamentable terror by foes;
Oh God, and Mary, and the sisters! Can I smile?
Can I be rejoiced with a mind wild with anxiety?

" He came as a lion with lightning impelling,
The excelling hawk, the victorious hawk of enterprise;
Llewelyn, the gentle sovereign,
Of courteous manners; the director of the filling of the circulating glass.[1]

" I am not accustomed to the habit of soaring[2];
I have not been roaming
*To view*[3] *the paths of the songs of Taliesin;*
Lo! I am not so agile
As, the end of the frail conflict of Breiddin
*To express, out of the bardic strains of Merdhin.*

" I will give thee counsel: who art most excellent in disposition;
Whose dread spreads beyond the sea!
Consider, when you oppress beyond the borders,
To make every one extend his head to his knees;
Be to the weak an equal distribution of the spoil!
Be truly mild to the songs of the right line!
Be of ardent courage in the slaughter — adhere to thy labour;
Destroy England, and plunder its multitudes.

" Mercy be to thee in thy stony fortress
For loving the prophetic Deity."

[1] *i.e.* Of the banquet.

[2] Literally, " whirling round."

[3] *i.e.* To track or imitate from inspection, as I conceive; but the word literally means to behold, or to view.

Gnawd yr yfawdd glyw gloyw win — o fual,
O fuarth buelin,
Gnawd cathleu cogeu cyntefin
Gnawd y tys tywys o egin
Gnawd y doeth cyfoeth cysyewin
Ni nawd nid llonydd allwynin
Hiraeth am ry wnaeth rewin
Braint brodyr gwellwyr gollewin
Broder de braw aele elin
Duw a mair a chwair yn chwerthin
Dothyw llew a lluchyg gorddin
Detholwalch buddugfalch byddin
Llywelyn llyerw freyenhin
Llary ddefawd llyw gwyrddrawd gwydrin
Nid wys gynnefawd gynnefin amchwyf
Ni rybum gerddenin
Edrych cyrdd cerddau Taliesin
Edrych ni mor wyf eddein
Ry ddarfod brau gysnod Breiddin
Ry ddywawd oi farddwawd Ferddin
Cyssul ath roddaf oth rin wyd goreu
Gorofu tra merin
Ystyrych pan dreisych dros ffin
Ystwng pawb hyd ben ei ddeulin
Bydd wrth wann gyfran gywrenhin
Bydd iawn llary wrth gorddau iownllin
Bydd wrddrud aer ddylud addilin
Dilein Lloegr a llwgr oi gwerin
Trugaredd ath so oth feinin gaerwedd
O garu Duw ddewin.

ELIDR SAIS, *Dad.* 345.

The import of the passage appears to me to be, that the poems of Taliesin and Merdhin existed in this author's time, or how could they be viewed, imitated, or spoken from?

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13. This author mentions Merdhin in another place.

"Though polished my bardic style after Merdhin."

Llathreit vy mardeir uedy *Myrdin.* *Awdl i Duw.* p. 302.

How could his style have been formed from that of Merdhin, if poems, believed to have been written by him, had not then existed?

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14. This author, in his elegy on the death of Rhodri, has also a passage, which undoubtedly alludes to the Gododin of Aneurin, for the reasons mentioned above of the similar allusion of Owen Cyveilioc, that is, he connects three things together, which are to be met with together in the Gododin, and I believe only there.

These were a mead-replenished army, a great disaster, and Cattraeth the scene of it.

"Woe to Britain, and its society!
From the loss of Rhodri, how greatly suitors will be straightened!
I was honoured by the mead replenishing army;
Oh, loss to me! a misfortune far worse
Than the ruin in the lands of Cattraeth could have caused."

Gwae Brydain am briodoriaeth
O golli Rhodri neud rhygaeth eirchiaid
Am parchai llu meddfaeth
O golled ym galled mawrwaeth
Gallas drais diredd Cattraeth.

ELIDR SAIS, 348.

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THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

EINIAWN AB GWGAWN lived between 1200 and 1260. In the poem which he addressed to Llywelyn the Great, often called the son of Iorwerth, he has this passage:

"Llywelyn, mayest thou be older, and of longer good fortune,
Than the venerable Llywarch, with the aptly ready flesh-piercer."

Llywelyn boed hyn boed hwy dichwein
No Llywarch hybarch hybar gicwein.

EIN. *Canu i L.* 321.

This clearly alludes to Llywarch Hên the bard. The epithet venerable, is but a synonym to Hen, or Aged; and the wish of better fortune, applies truely to the afflictions, which his poems so often mention. The other singular expression, which more literally means "that which is sheathed in flesh," appears to me to allude to, or rather the idea of the expression was taken from, the remarkable opening of Llywarch's elegy on Urien Reged. In this the bard, in the full ardour for revenge, begins his poem with this apostrophe to his spear:

"Let me be guided onward, thou ashen thruster;
Fierce thy presence in the mutual conflict;
'Tis better to kill than parley.[1]

"Let me be guided onward, thou ashen thruster;
Fiercely was it said, in the passage of Lech
Dunawd, the son of Pabo, never flies.

"Let me be guided onward, thou fierce ashen thruster;
Bitter and sullen as the scornful laughter of the sea,
Was the war of the shouting multitude
Of Urien Reged, burning and furious."

Dymcyvarwyddiad ynhwch dywal
Baran yn nghyvlwch

[1] Archaiol. p. 103, and in Owen's Llywarch, p. 22.

Gwell yd llad nog yd ydholwch
Dymcyfarwyddiad ynhwch dywal
Dywedydd yn nrws Llech
" Dunawd val Pabo ni thech."
Dymcyfarwyddiad ynhwch dywal chwern
Blwng chwerthin mor ryvel dorvloeddiad
Urien Reged greidiawl gravel.
LLYWARCH HÊN, *Mar. Ur.* 103.

Such lines as these might lead a bard to designate Llywarch with a spear, whose sheath was flesh. This apostrophe seems the natural parent of the image.

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Between 1200, and 1250, lived PHYLIP BRYDYDD. He has left six poems. In one, called a Contention with the Poetasters, he mentions Taliesin in a very remarkable manner:

" The *ancient* song of Taliesin, to the King of the Elements."
Hengerd Talyesin y teyrned elvyd.
PH. BRYD. *Amrys.* 378.

Here is an author, who flourished in 1230, describing Taliesin's poetry as being at that time *ancient.* An ancient song, of course, implies a song written some centuries before the writer who uses the epithet. If about 1230, a bard styled Taliesin's poetry, *ancient* poetry, with what propriety can we say in contradiction to him, that it was not ancient, but had been then recently forged. Surely this bard Phylip, whom we may justly call ancient now, was a better judge of what was ancient in his day, than we are at the distance of almost six centuries after him.

By the song of Taliesin to the King of the Elements, it is highly probable that he means Taliesin's Poem to the Wind, which yet exists.

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DAVID BENVRAS lived between 1190 and 1240. He has left twelve poetical pieces, chiefly elegies and heroic odes. One of his odes to Llewelyn the Great, he opens with this invocation:

" May the Being who made the splendours of the West;
The sun and chilling moon, glorious habitations;
May he that rules above in universal light, graciously grant to me
The fulness of the glowing muse of Merdhin
To sing the praise of heroes, as Aneurin sang
In the day that he composed the Gododin:
That I may celebrate the felicity of the people of the happy land
Of the chief of Gwyned, the prosperous boundary."

Gwr a wnaeth llewych o'r gorllewin
Haul a lloer addoer addef iessin
Am gwnel radd uchel rwyf cyfychwin
Cyflawn awen awydd *Fyrddin*

I ganu moliant mal *Aneurin* gynt
Dydd y cant Ododin.
Gwynedd bendefig ffynnedig ffin
Gwanas deyrnas deg cywrenhin.
D. Benvras, *Awdl i Lyw.*

We have here a full attestation of these points:

That in this bard's days there was a poem called the Gododin;
That its author was Aneurin;
That its subject was the praise of heroes;
That Merdhin had also composed poetry;
That Merdhin's poetry was then extant,
For the bard describes it as "the fulness of the glowing muse!"
That both Aneurin's and Merdhin's poetry were then highly estimated.

To feel the complete force of this testimony, let us recollect that this bard was born in the twelfth century.

This same bard, David Benvras, is also a witness in favour of Taliesin—for in the same ode he sings,

"If it had happened to me to have been a prophet,
If I had the bardic style of the primitive bardic genius,
I could not have narrated the merit of his martial labours;
Not Taliesin could have done it." P. 308.

Be im byw be byddwn dewin
Ym marddair mawrddawn gyssevin
Adrawdd ei ddaed aerdrin ni allwn
Ni allai Daleissin. Ibid.

It is obvious, from the association of the bard's ideas in this extract, that he deemed Taliesin one of the early bards of his country, and that Taliesin's muse was directed to describe the actions of warriors. It is also my impression, that if Taliesin's fame had not been upheld by works of his then existing, he would not have been so particularised.

The same bard also mentions Llywarch; for in praising one Gruffud, he says,

"Gruffudd with crimson'd arms will be likened
In the spear of honour to Llywarch, the son of Elidir."

Gruffudd arfeu rhudd rydebygir
Greid barch i Llywarch fab Elidir.
D. Benv. *Mar. Ruffudd.* 320.

The poet Llywarch was the son of Elider Lydanwyn. We have already mentioned how Llywarch distinguished his spear in his elegy on Urien.

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Llygad Gwr was a bard, and lived between 1220 and 1270. He has left five poems on warlike subjects. Two are odes to

Llywelyn, the son of Gruffud, the last British prince who ruled in Wales. In one of these he says,

"His fiery revages, like those of Flamddwyn, extended far."

Hirbell val Flamddwyn y flamgyrcheu.

LLYGAD GWR, p. 345.

This is an allusion to that poem of Taliesin's before mentioned, in which it is said that Flamddwyn spread from Argoed to Arvynydd.

"Flamddwyn hastened with four bodies of men
To surround Godeu and Reged;
He spread from Argoed to Arvynydd."

Dygrysowys Flamddwyn yn bedwarllu
Goddeu a Reged i ymddullu
Dyfwy o Argoed hyd Arfynydd.

TALIESIN, *Gwaith Arg. Ll.* 53.

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GWILYM DHU, who flourished between 1280 and 1320, in his poem to Sir Gruffudd Llwyd in prison, also alludes to Flamddwyn, p. 409; and in the same poem expressly mentions Taliesin, p. 410, and Elfin; and is clearly allowed.

After mentioning that his hero, Gruffudd, was a prisoner, he invokes St. David thus:

"If mine were the power characterised in Taliesin
When he fetched Elfin, the breaker of the spear of conflict,
The impulse should be to the benefit of Gruffudd."

Pei mau pwyll ddiau ddyad Talyesin
Pan gyrchawdd Elffin par trin trychiad
Pwyll yudd Ruffudd.

GWILYM DHU *i Syr Gruffudd Llwyd*, 410.

In the same poem he also mentions Llywarch:

"The contemplated reverence of Llywarch, the ruler of a tribe."

Myfyr barch Llywarch llywydd ciwdawd. Ib. 410.

In his elegy on Trahaiarn, he mentions many bards, and among them, he notices Merdhin:

"Good was the fortune of the song to Gwion the divine;
Good was Merdhin, with his descent from the tribe of Meirchion.
Good was Llevoed, ever the supporter of morality."

Da fu ffawd y wawd i Wiawn ddewin
Da Fyrddin a' i lin o lwyth Meirchiawn
Da Lefoed erioed da radlawn arddelw.

GWILYM, *Mar. Trahaiarn*, 411.

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IORWERTH VYCHAN wrote poetry between 1290 and 1340. In his ode to a pretty woman, he mentions Merdhin as a poet:

"More precious with the splendid bards every long day,
That when Merdhin, of profound learning, sang of Gwendydd."

Ys mwy gan y beird heird bob hirddyd
Na fan gant Myrddin mawrddysc Gwendydd. 415.

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Rhisserdyn, between 1290 and 1340, composed an ode to Hywel ab Grufudd. In this he mentions Aneurin as a bard, with whose style of composition he was acquainted, and Merdhin, as an author, whose compositions he possessed and valued.

"A tongue with the eloquence of Aneurin's splendid panegyrics."

"I will preserve, in honoured authority, the memorials of Merdhin."

Tavawt un arawt Aneurin gwawt glaer.
Kaf am urddawl rwysc koven Myrdin.
Rhiss. *i Hywel.* 433.

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Madoc Dwygraig, a poet between 1290 and 1340, has left ten poems. In the verses to a loose woman, he mentions Merdhin, and obviously alludes to his Avallenau. The first two words, Afallen beren, of all Madoc's stanzas, are those which begin almost all the stanzas of Merdhin's Avallenau. Indeed, Madoc's poem is a complete parody on it. He mentions Merdhin in it twice:

"An apple-tree
Equally bearing a profusion of leaves was given to Merdhin."

Ail yn dwyn rhyddail i rhodded Fyrddin.
Madawg, *i Ferch* 487.

"Shall I become like Merdhin." Ibid. 488.

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Of Sevnyn's poems, between 1320 and 1378, three remain. In his elegy on Iorworth Gyrioc, he mentions Merdhin and Aneurin thus: 505, 506.

"May I have the gift of amusing language,
Large as the greatly gifted vineous movements of Merdhin's imagination."

"The report of thousands is the praise of Aneurin."

Maith mawrddwyn gwindaith Myrddin geudawd
Medd cyhoedd miloedd molawd Aneurin.
Sevnyn, *Mar. Iorw.* 503, 504.

This is a strong indication of Aneurin's celebrity.

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Iorwerth Llwyd, who lived between 1310 and 1360, mentions Merdhin:

"The eloquent and wisely expressed inquiries of Merdhin."
Hyawdl doethfin holion Myrdhin. P. 506.

And alludes to Elphin, p. 506. on whom Taliesin wrote.

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Grufudd ab Maredudd, who lived at the same period, mentions Llywarch twice, p. 458. and 476.

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So David ab Gwilym, one of the favourites of the Welsh muse, in this century, mentions both Merdhin and Taliesin.[1]

I am sensible that I must have trespassed to my own disadvantage on the patience of the reader, by this long and wearying detail, which has even wearied myself. But such a series of evidence as this, is of the last importance on such a question as the present. A series like this, we should exact and search for, if Pindar or Eschylus had been put upon their trials. It is a series of proofs which forgery can never have. It can only attend genuine works, and I adduce it as forming a very substantial part of that column of evidence by which the ancient Welsh poetry must now be supported.

### SUMMARY OF THE PRECEDING EVIDENCE.

I will beg leave to assist the reader's recollection by a short summary of the preceding.

Before the twelfth century, we have found all the four ancient bards mentioned as bards, and some of their observations recited. In one, Taliesin and Merdhin were mentioned as contemporaries, who conversed together. The Avallenau and the Gododin were in others indirectly alluded to.

In the works of the twelfth century, we found Merdhin's poetry mentioned several times. Once his Avallenau obviously referred to, at another time his works spoken of as extant, and at another time as being then ancient.

Taliesin is not only several times mentioned as a bard of distinction and repute, but his poems were spoken of as having been seen, and of course extant; his poem on the battle of Argoed Llwyvain was three times alluded to; his Mead Song and his Mab Cyvreu were quoted.

The Gododin of Aneurin was twice indirectly alluded to.

In the thirteenth century, Llywarch was mentioned with epithets and circumstances that seemed borrowed from his poems.

The Gododin was expressly mentioned as Aneurin's, and with high panegyric, and as extant. His power of heroic poetry was twice besides alluded to.

Taliesin is mentioned often as a bard of great celebrity, and

[1] See p. 8. 51. 222. of his works, edited by Messrs. Owen Jones, and William Owen, now Dr. Owen Pughe.

who sang heroic poetry. His poem to the Wind was expressly named, and as a poem esteemed *ancient* in this century. His poems on Argoed Llwyvain, and on Elfin, were also alluded to, and his poetic powers are spoken of as objects of emulation. Merdhin is repeatedly mentioned as a bard, and as having left works of great estimation; his Avallenau is even parodied, and his style is mentioned as an object of imitation.

I submit that all this must be allowed, to prove that the works of these bards, for which I am reasoning, were in being in the twelfth century. On this vantage ground I take my stand. It is a great point gained, to show that this degree of antiquity at least cannot be denied to them. It must afford the reader much satisfaction, I apprehend, to be assured that when his attention is called to these interesting remains, it will not be bestowed on a modern forgery.

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The questions now to be discussed will be therefore these: Were these poems fabricated in the twelfth century, or before? or, Are they as genuine as they pretend to be?

That they could not be fabricated in the twelfth century, will, I hope, appear from some of the leading topics, which I shall arrange by and by, under the head of their internal evidence. But I will take the opportunity now of requesting the reader to remark, and there is not one tittle of evidence extant, that they did first appear in the twelfth century. It is an assertion which cannot be proved, and which, therefore, is gratuitous and visionary. I wish to put this strongly, and for this reason. If there were any sort of direct evidence, to show that these poems were made in the twelfth century, then all the good effect I could hope to gain, by adducing facts and reasoning, in order to place them in the sixth, would be, that I should present one mass of testimony against another mass of testimony. It would be a case of opposing probabilities. It would be, like what trials about horses, footways, and boundaries too commonly are; I mean a competition of evidence, in which the court and jury can hardly discern which side they ought in justice to prefer.

But the present argument is not of this species. In considering whether these poems belong to the sixth century, or the twelfth, there is no opposing wall to pull down, no mistaken testimony to refute. The supposition which places them in the twelfth century, has not one fact to warrant it. There are the decisive proofs of MSS. and the series of quotations, which I have already adduced, to prove that they must have been in existence in the twelfth century; but there is no document existing that confines them to this century, or that imposes any restriction on the liberty of inquiring to what previous century they belong.

No reasoner, and no antiquary, will allow mere guesses, or mere assertions, to be sufficient to limit them to the twelfth, or to any other age. But finding the ground unoccupied, they will

feel themselves free to examine what the period is in which the weight of proof inclines to place the first existence of these poems.

The evidence already adduced to show that they were extant in the twelfth century, if fairly reasoned from, will compel us to infer that they were in existence anterior to the twelfth. Those MSS. of these poems, which seem to belong to this century, point our attention to a preceding age. They do not adduce the poems as anonymous poems, which might have been the works of authors of the twelfth century, but they state them to be more ancient compositions. So the bards of the twelfth, and other centuries, who cite or allude to them or their authors, do not refer to them as works of their contemporaries, but as of bards whom we know to have belonged to an anterior period. Therefore the natural tendency of the evidence already stated, is to show that we must inquire into a period preceding the twelfth for the chronology of their authors.

III. The next fact which I shall proceed to substantiate is, there were bards among the Britons in the sixth century.

It is certainly necessary to ascertain whether there were any bards at all in the sixth century, because if such men did not then exist among the Britons, the question cannot be agitated further.

That there were bards in the sixth century, seems to me to be a position which may be proved two ways; 1st, by inference — that is, proving their existence both before and after that period, and inferring from thence, that they were also in the middle interval; 2dly, by direct evidence of authors contemporary with the sixth century. I will beg leave to use both species of proof, lest any gentleman should think that the direct evidence is not alone sufficiently conclusive.

It may be therefore first stated, that there were Bards among the Britons, who composed and sang poetry, on the actions of celebrated men, before the fourth century, and in the tenth and twelfth centuries.

The Celtic population of Gaul and Britain was distinguished by a remarkable set of men, whom the classical authors called Druids. Cæsar has described them with his usual intelligence, and if we do justice to his inquiring mind, sedate judgment, and military habit of exactness, we shall not doubt his precision. He says, that their singular discipline flourished most in Britain, and that one of the Druidical practices was to commit to memory a great number of *verses*.[1] Other authors have discriminated the Druids into three sorts of persons, who are named the Druids, the Ovates or Vates, and the Bards. These three orders are stated by Strabo[2], by Diodorus Siculus[3], and Ammianus Marcellinus.[4] The Bards are called poets, and composers of hymns, by Strabo; and they sung to instruments like lyres, according to Diodorus. Lucan also

[1] De Bell. Gal. l. vi.
[2] Geog. l. iv. p. 197—302.
[3] l. v. p. 213—308.
[4] l. xv. p. 75.

mentions them as celebrating the deeds of their heroes in verse. His words, literally translated, are, "You also, ye Vates, who transmit to immortality by your praises the spirits of the brave, of those slain in battle; Bards! ye may securely pour your numerous songs."[1]

Other authors speak of them in the same strain. Appian exhibits a Bard as celebrating a king for his descent[2], as well as for his wealth and courage; and Posidonius declares that the Celts carried Bards with them, as the companions of their table who sang their praises.[3]

Some of these authors lived before the first century; some afterwards. Marcellinus, who flourished in the fourth, says, "The Bards chanted in heroic verses, to the sweet notes of the lyre, the brave deeds of the illustrious."[4]

That these singular people had a degree of knowlege among them, which is not common to barbarous nations, is clear from what Strabo, Cæsar, and Mela state of the Druids. Strabo, after mentioning the Bards, says, that the Ovates sacrifice and contemplate the nature of things, and that the Druids, besides the study of nature, dispute concerning moral philosophy. They thought that neither the souls of men, nor the world, would be destroyed, though they would suffer at some period from fire and water.[5] Cæsar[6], and Mela[7], declare that they disputed and taught their youth about the stars and their motion, the magnitude of the world, the nature of things, and the power and energy of the immortal Gods.

That Bards existed in Britain in and before the tenth century, is obvious to all who inspect the laws of Howel Dha. He reigned soon after the year 900.[8] His laws not only mention the Bards, but speak of them as a regular and established order of men. They are described as being in an organised state in different ranks and degrees, with various duties and emoluments assigned to them, and as forming an important and respected part of the royal household.

The one called Bardd Teulu, was the Bard of the family. There was also a Bardd Cadeirioc, who was superior to the others.[9] He is also called the Pencerdd, the chief of song; and he was the Bard who had obtained the Cadair.[10] The other Bards were in some degree subjected to him, for no Bard was to ask for any thing without his leave, while he held the office, excepting Bards from other sovereignties.[11]

At the three principal feasts, the family Bard was to sit near the Penteulu, the head of the household.[12] The importance of this position, we may estimate by observing a preceding law, which dictates that the Penteulu was to be the king's son, or nephew, or brother, or a person of suitable dignity.[13] He was to give the harp

[1] l. i. [2] In his Celtico. [3] Ath. Diep. l. vi. p. 246.
[4] l. xv. c. 9. p. 73. [5] l. iv. p. 302. [6] l. vi.
[7] l. iii. c. 2. p. 243. [8] He went to Rome in 926.
[9] Leges Howel, p. 36. [10] Ibid. 68. [11] Ibid. 69.
[12] Ibid. 35. [13] Ibid. 15.

to the Bard, who was to sing to him whenever he pleased.[1] The Bardd Cadeirioc was one of the fourteen who sat at the king's table, near the judge of the court.[2]

The family Bard enjoyed free land, a horse, and clothing from the king and queen.[3] He was supported by the Penteulu, and had other privileges.

When songs were required, the Bardd Cadeirioc was to sing first the praise of God, then of the king; after him, the family Bard displayed his powers. When an army was ready to engage, the Bard was to sing the "Unbeniaeth Prydain." The monarchy of Britain.[4]

If we advance to the twelfth century, we find the most decisive evidence of their continuing existence and credit. Giraldus Cambrensis, who was born in 1150, mentions, that, on a certain day, Llewelyn, prince of Gwynedh, held a great court, at which all his nobles were present. At the end of the dinner, a man of eloquence came forward. Giraldus adds, "He was of that kind which, in the British, as well as in the Latin language, are called *bards*."[5]

That these bards applied their muse to historical purposes, is proved by the speech of the Welsh prince, who says, "As long as Wales shall stand, this noble deed will be transmitted with deserved praises and applauses by historical writings, and *by the mouths of those singing*."[6]

But if we appeal to the Welsh libraries, we shall find that there are poems now remaining of many Bards who lived in the twelfth century. I will name the Bards, and note the pages which their works occupy in the Welsh Archaiology[7], and the times wherein they flourished.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1120—1160 | Meilyr, | Page 189 |
| 1150—1190 | Gwalchmai, | 193 |
| 1150—1200 | Cynddelu, | 204 |
| 1150—1197 | Owain Cyveiliawg, | 265 |
| 1150—1200 | Daniel ab Ll. Mew, | 269 |
| 1160—1220 | Gwynvardd Brycheiniawg, | 269 |
| 1160—1220 | Gwylym Ryvel, | 274 |
| 1140—1172 | Hywel ab Owain Gwynedd, | 275 |
| 1160—1220 | Llwyarch ab Llywelyn, | 279 |
| 1170—1220 | Meilyr ab Gwalchmai, | 329 |
| 1170—1220 | Einiawn ab Gwalchmai, | 329 |
| 1160—1210 | Seisyll, | 338 |
| 1160—1220 | Elidyr Sais, | 345 |
| 1170—1210 | Dewi Mynyw, | 543 |

[1] Leges Howel, p. 16, 17. [2] Ibid. 14.

[3] Ibid. 35. [4] P. 36. See more of them, p. 29. 68, 69.

[5] "Processit in fine prandii coram omnibus vir quidam lingue dicacis, cujusjusmodi linguâ Britannicâ sicut et latinâ *Bardi* dicuntur unde Lucanus plurima concreti fuderunt carmina Bardi." GIRALDUS *de Jure et Statu Menev. Ecc. ap. Wharton's Anglia Sacra*, vol. ii. p. 559.

[6] "Quod, quamdiu Wallia stabit, nobile factum hujus et per historias scriptas et *per ora canentium* dignis per tempora cuncta laudibus atque preconiis efferretur." GIRALD. *Ib.*

[7] In the first volume.

The succeeding centuries abound with Bards whose works are also extant. I will mention only the poets of the following, or thirteenth century, to give the reader an idea of the Welsh poetry extant.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1230—1280 | Llywelyn Vardd, - - - - | Page 355 |
| 1250—1290 | Bleddyn Vardd, - - - - - - | 363 |
| 1210—1260 | Grufudd ab Gwrgeneu, - - - - | 373 |
| 1200—1250 | Phylip Brydydd, - - - - - - | 375 |
| 1210—1260 | Prydydd Bychan, - - - - - | 379 |
| 1230—1270 | Einiawn ab Madawg Rhahawd - - - | 391 |
| 1270—1320 | Gwerneg ab Clydno, - - - - - | 392 |
| 1240—1280 | Hywel Voel ab Griffri, - - - - | 392 |
| 1263—1300 | Gruufdd ab yr Ynâd Coch, - - - - | 394 |
| 1220—1300 | Madawg ab Gwallter, - - - - - | 404 |
| 1280—1320 | Gwilym Dhu, - - - - - - | 408 |
| 1280—1330 | Llywelyn Brydd Hodnaut, - - - - | 412 |
| 1280—1330 | Hillyn, - - - - - - - | 413 |
| 1290—1340 | Iorwerth Vychan, - - - - - | 414 |
| 1290—1340 | Llywelyn Dhu, - - - - - - | 416 |
| 1290—1340 | Llywarch Llaety, - - - - - | 416 |
| 1290—1340 | Casnodyn, - - - - - - - | 421 |
| 1290—1340 | Rhisserdyn, - - - - - - | 428 |
| 1290—1340 | Gruffud ab D. ab Tudor, - - - - | 477 |
| 1290—1340 | Madawg Dwygraig, - - - - - | 481 |

There are as many Bards in the two subsequent centuries.

V. That there were similar Bards in the sixth century.

Whoever maturely weighs the circumstances adduced in the preceding argument, will not be unwilling to admit this assertion the moment it is made. Because, if they do not warrant the inference, that Bards *continued* to be in Britain, during the centuries between the fourth and tenth, what a strange supposition must be made? They are proved to have existed here before the fourth, in the tenth, twelfth, and following centuries. To reconcile with these facts a denial of their existence in the sixth, we must believe that after having flourished in the island, they became extinct; that they re-appeared again about the tenth, to vanish again and resuscitate in the twelfth century, since which period they have remained till near our times. To explain the frequent vanishings and re-appearances of these apparitions by reasoning or history, will certainly be found much more difficult than to admit the probable inference, that they never disappeared at all, but continued to flourish from the fourth century to the twelfth; an inference which the laws of Howel corroborate, because the Bards appear there in a character of much dignity and credit, with every appearance of a long previous establishment.

That there were Bards in the sixth century is a more credible fact than even their authenticated existence in the first. Because, between these periods, the Roman conquest and colonization of

the island took place. The Romans continued in Britain till the beginning of the fifth century; and it is expressly stated by Tacitus, of one of their governors, what is probable of most of his successors, that his policy was directed to improve and civilize the Britons. Now it would be a new discovery to make, that Roman civilization would diminish the knowlege or intellectual talents of a semi-barbarous people. Surely, if there had been any literary talent in Britain before the Romans came, it would be rather augmented than destroyed by the literature and intercourse of this polished nation for almost four hundred years.

The continuity of the bardic profession from the days of Cæsar to more recent times, appears to me to be strongly intimated by the continued use and application of the term Bards to the Welsh poets during all the interval. Strabo, Diodorus, and Posidonius, called the poets of the Celtic nations Bardoi. Lucan and Marcellinus, Bardi. The laws of Howel Dha exhibit the Welsh poets of the tenth century under the same name of Bardd. Giraldus, in the twelfth century, attests that they then also bore the same appellation; and all the Welsh poems and authors existing designate them through every age by the same term. So indigenous is this word in the Welsh language, that it is the root of twenty-two combinations, all alluding to the original meaning. We have also the evidence of a Roman author, that the word was borrowed from the Celtic in Gaul, from which Britain was peopled. Sextus Pompeius Festus says, that Bardus is a word which, in ancient Gaul, signified singer, a man who sung the praises of the brave. He adds, that it was derived from their order of Bards.[1]

Two great events happened in Britain in the fifth century, which peculiarly tended to inspire and perpetuate its Bards. One was the secession of the Britons from the Roman government, and the assertion of their independence, about the year 410.[2] The other was the invasion of the Saxons. What subjects could have given to poetry more energy and importance than these incidents. The Bardic genius must not only have burnt with new zeal and inspiration, but the chiefs must have more liberally encouraged, and the people more enthusiastically applauded it.

We have one direct evidence that there were British poets in the sixth century, who sang the praises of the great, in a casual passage of Venantius Fortunatus. In panegyrising the Dux Lupus, he tells him, that the British Chrotta sings him:

> Romanus que lyra plaudat tibi, barbarus harpa
> Græcus anhillata, *chrotta Britanna canat.*[3]

This was the ancient Welsh crwth, a sort of violin. It is mentioned in the laws of Howel Dha. It is probably the same to which Cuthbert, in the eighth century, the pupil of our venerable

[1] Bardus, Gallice cantor appellatur, qui virorum fortium laudes canit: a gente Bardorum. *Gloss.*

[2] See History of Anglo-Saxons, vol. i. p. 180.

[3] L. vii. p. 169. ed. Mogunt. 1617.

Bede, alludes: "I should like to have a cytharista who could play on the cithara, which we call *Rottæ*, because I have a cithara."[1]

There are two passages of Gildas, who, as well as Fortunatus, lived in the sixth century, which seem to me to be meant of Bards. The first is a part of his violent declamation against the British kings[2]: "By their erected greediness of ears are heard not the praises of God, from the tuneful voice of the youths of Christ sweetly modulating, and the spirit of ecclesiastical melody; but *their own praises*, which are nothing, *from the mouths of scoundrel proclaimers, full of lies, foaming with ardour together, and braying it like bacchanals.*"

If we consider the passage, I think we must perceive that it is an intended contrast between two sorts of vocal music, the ecclesiastical and that used before chieftains. The first is described with smooth and applausive epithets: the other is not described, but is branded with angry phrase. Now, if we recollect the enmity which at all times subsisted between the Welsh bards and the monks; the custom of the bards, to sing at the feasts the praises of their chiefs; the direction in Howel's laws, that they should do so; and the very virulent phraseology in which Gildas indulges throughout his epistle; I presume it will not be incorrect to say, that he alludes to Bards in this paragraph. Gildas is not the first man to whom bards and secular music have been offensive. If Plato could banish Homer; if a prince, to whom Ariosto presented his poems, could ask him where the devil he got such fooleries; if the monks, in the middle ages, could so abuse the minstrels, and they the monks, as we know they reciprocally did, we shall not be surprised that Gildas called the bards scoundrels, and censured their encomiastic songs, as bacchanalian uproar.[3]

In another passage, he says, amidst his inculpation of the British clergy, that they were slow to hear the precepts of the saints; "but strenuous and intent to listen to idle things, and the foolish fables of secular men."[4] What were these recited fables of the

[1] 16 Bibl. Mag. p. 88.

[2] "Arrecto aurium auscultantur captu non Dei laudes canora Christi tyronum voce suaviter modulante, pneumaque ecclesiasticæ melodiæ; sed propriæ (que nihil sunt) surciferorum referto mendaciis simulque spumanti flegmate — preconum ore, ritu bacchantium concrepante." GILDAS, Epist. p. 13. ed. Gale.

[3] A passage in the Cyvoesi Merdhin shows, that if Gildas talked with fury of the Bards of this period, they were as angry with the Monks; for Merdhin says,

> I will not receive the sacrament
> From the detestable Monks,
> With their gowns on their haunches:
> May the sacrament be administered to me by God himself.
>
> Ny chymmeras gymun
> Gan ysgymun Veneich
> Ac eu taygeu ar eu clun
> Am cymuno Duw e hun. *Arch.* 149.

[4] "Ad præcepta sanctorum — oscitantes ac stupidos et ad ludicra et ineptas secularium hominum fabulas — strenuos et intentos." GILDAS, p. 23.

secular men, for which the clergy deserted their religious reading? Is it any undue construction of the words, to suppose they meant the compositions of the bards?

But why should it be supposed that the Britons had not bards in the sixth and seventh centuries? The Franks then had poets —the Saxons had poets—the Irish had poets.[1] Let us, then, not deny them to the Welsh!

## ADDITIONAL REMARKS.

That there were ancient poets and their compositions among the Bretons of Armorica, was the assertion and belief of our ancient English and Anglo-Norman poets and trouveurs and others. Some may be mentioned from M. de la Rue's Recherches sur les Ouvrages des Bardes Armoricanes, 8—20.

It is not only Chaucer who says that they made rhimed poems in their language:

> These olde gentil Bretons in her dayes
> Of diverse aventures maden layes,
> Rimeyd in hir firste Breton tongue,
> Which layes with hir instrument they songe,
> In Armoricke that called is Bretaigne.

Nor is it only the old metrical romance of Emare that notices them;

> Ther is on of Brytagne layes
> That was used by olde dayes.

But in the older poem, intitled "Songe du Dieu d'Amour," of the twelfth century, they are thus mentioned:

> De Rotruenges etait fait tot li pons,
> Totes les planches de dits et de chansons:
> De sons de harpes, les estaces del fons,
> Et les saliies des doux lais des Britons.
> *MS. Bib. Paris, No.* 7595.

In the thirteenth century the French trouveur Regnaud declared that he translated his "Lai d'Ignaures" from a Breton original. He makes the hero lord of the castle of Auriol, in Bretagne. MS. ibid.

Another trouveur, in his "Lai de l'Epine," says, "It is taken from the histories preserved at Cardiff, in the church of St. Aaron. These stories are equally known in Bretagne, and in other places." MS. ibid.

This authority connects the Breton and Welsh compositions of this sort.

[1] Bede, in his Life of St. Patrick, mentions two poets in Ireland in the time of the saint. "In memoria Dubtag poetam optimum—quidam adolescens poeta nomine Pheg." Bede's Works, iii. p. 320. This passage of Bede, which I met with in going over his works, gives a solid foundation for the belief that there were Irish Poets, or Bards, in the seventh century.

Another trouveur translated the "Lai de Graalent Mor," who was one of the half-historical and half-fabled heroes of Bretagne; and says that it was sung all over that country. MSS. Bib. Paris, 7989.

In the twelfth century, Chretien de Troyes says, in his Roman du Chevalier au Lion, "If I agree so much with the Bretons, it is because they have preserved by their songs the memory of the men who acquired honour by their great artists." MS. ibid. La Rue, p. 16.

The "Lay of Tristan" also mentions the Breton poems:

> Bons lais de harpe vous apris
> Laes Bretons de notre pais. LA RUE, p. 20.

Mr. de la Rue's book on the Armorican Bards was printed in 1815. But eight years before this, in the year 1807, I published, in the second edition of the History of the Anglo-Saxons, the following particulars concerning them, which, having omitted in the next edition to put them into an appendix, I will here reprint.

That the Gothic nations had poets we learn from Tacitus[1]; but when we consider what has been delivered to us of the intellectual cultivation of the Druids, we cannot put the Gothic Scalds into competition with the Keltic Bards, who were one of the most distinguished branches of the Druidical order. We not only find them attending the kings, to sing their genealogies and praises[2], and recording the actions of the illustrious[3]; but we are also informed, that the lessons of the Druids to their disciples were conveyed in a great number of verses.[4] These must have been numerous indeed, as youth remained twenty years under their Druidical education[5]; and if we recollect that the Druids taught their youth about the stars and their motion, the magnitude of the world, the nature of things, and the power and energy of the immortal gods, we shall be inclined to think that the Keltic Bards were superior in some respects to the Gothic Scalds, in the degree of their mental cultivation.

The Keltic Bards were not confined to Britain. They had also pervaded France; and more especially were in those parts which the Kelts continued to occupy. As the Romans spread their conquest over Gaul, the Keltic customs gave way to Roman civilization, and to Christianity. But there are, in every country invaded by a foreign enemy of dissimilar manners, some corners, to which the more stubborn of the ancient races retire with the prejudices and habits of their ancestors. Cornwall and Wales were the places in Britain in which the Druids sought refuge from the Romans, and the Britons from the Saxons; and Armorica, or Bretagne, seems to have been the part of France which became

[1] De Mor. Germ.
[2] App. in Celtic.—Posid. ap. Athen. l. vi. p. 246.
[3] Lucan. l. i. Amm. Marc. l. xv. c. 9. Festus Gloss.
[4] Cæsar de Bell. Gall. l. vi. [5] Ibid. l. vi.

the last asylum of the ancient Kelts. That the Druids and the Pagan worship were respected in Armorica, in the fourth century, is evident from the poems of Ausonius; who mentions of his friend, as a flattering distinction, that he was a warden of the temple of Belenus, and descended from the Druids of Armorica.[1] The Bards may be, therefore, supposed to have flourished in this region, as a part of the Druidical system.

When the Britons fled from the Saxons, they transplanted themselves in numerous colonies to Armorica, in the fifth and sixth centuries. Ruval settled, with a large body, in the north part of the province, from Leon to Dol.[2] Fracanus, the kinsman of Cato, probably Cai, the friend of Arthur, went thither with his family.[3] We also find Conomer, a British king, in the upper regions of Bretagne; and Weroc, another, ruling at Vannes.[4] Grallon governed in those parts which are called Cornwall.[5] This was the district near Brest; of which Quimper was the metropolis.[6] Caradoc Vreichvras, the personal friend and warlike companion of Arthur, and who had governed Cornwall in England under him, also established a kingdom in Bretagne.[7]

These emigrations of some of the most active characters in Britain must have occasioned a great influx of bards accompanying their chiefs; because bards were a regular and established part of every chieftain's family; and their songs made a principal part of all their festivities.[8] Many of their clergy, who were the only other part of the people who attended to intellectual cultivation, went thither also.[9] Gildas, one of their most esteemed literary men of that day, emigrated with the rest.[10] The yellow plague, which

[1]
Nec reticebo senem,
Nomine Phœbitium,
Qui Beleni ædituus
Nil opis inde tulit:
Sed tamen, ut placitum,
Stirpe satus Druidum,
Gentis Aremoricæ. *Prof.* 10.

Also,
Tu, Bagocassis, stirpe Druidorum satus,
Si fama non fallit fidem,
Beleni sacratum ducis e templo genus;
Et inde vobis nomina. *Prof.* 4.

[2] Lobineau Hist. Bretagne, p. 6, 7.

[3] Vita Winwal. an Amorican MS. app. Boll. Act. Sanct. 1 Martii, 256.

[4] Vita Gildæ ap. Bouquet, t. iii. p. 453. [5] Vit. Winw. 259.

[6] Vit. S. David, MSS. of Utrecht ap. Boll. 1 Mart. 139.: and see Bolland, 1 Feb. 602.

[7] Vita Paternus, MSS. Cott. Lib. Vesp. A. 14. and Brev. Venet. ap Boll. 2 April, p. 381. It was calculated in the year 1818, that there were about 900,000 persons who still spoke the Breton language in France.

[8] Leges Howel Dha, p. 35, 36. 68, 69. and 14—17. Taliesin is stated to have been in Armorica, in Jeffry's poem, MSS. Vesp. E. 4. p. 124.

[9] As St. Teiliaw. Vit. ap. Boll. 1 Feb. 308. The emigrants in Bretagne sent for Sampson from Wales, and made him bishop of Doll. MSS. Vesp. A. 14. p. 47. St. Paternus settled in Armorica, ib. MSS. p. 77—80.

[10] Vita Gild. *ubi supra.*

raged at that time, increased the frequency and largeness of the emigrations.[1] The turbulent period which afterwards followed in Wales must have made Bretagne, for a long time, a favourite retreat.

From the preceding facts, of the continuance of the Druids in Armorica, and consequently of their Bards, and of the British emigrations, it is clear, that poetry must have flourished more in Bretagne, during the sixth and seventh centuries, than in Britain or any other part of the continent. The Franks having occupied the best part of Gaul, and the Saxons having overspread England, the ruder Gothic manners of both nations diffused much national barbarism, in the countries which they occupied. As the Keltic and British Bards were superior in cultivation to the Gothic Scalds, so the Bards of Bretagne must have been the most improved poets which then existed in those parts of Europe from which the Gothic nations had recently expelled the Romans. Among the Gothic nations, the Christian clergy discountenanced their Scalds, because the Scalds were the advocates of their Pagan superstitions; but the British Bards having adopted Christianity, always maintained their rank and influence in Wales and Bretagne; though they sometimes bickered with the monks.

From singing warlike odes to flatter the chiefs, or mystical mythology to please themselves, the transition to chanting or reciting more circumstantial or narrative poetry, to please the people, was neither difficult nor improbable. Emigrations and new settlements, and the penury and distress which must have followed such violent changes of former habits, made the chiefs less able to reward their Bards: and must have driven the Bards to increase their means of support by interesting the people as well as their lords.[2] If the metaphors of lyric poetry satisfied the chieftain, the details of narrative fiction would alone be level to the comprehension of the vulgar. To compose in a slavish mixture of alliteration and rime was more laborious than a prose recitation; and therefore the Bards, who sought to interest the people, would begin gradually to use the unlaboured tale, rather than the artificial verse.

That some of the Bards of Wales actually submitted to the composition of tales, is evidenced by their Mabinogion, which still exist[3]: and that the Bards of Bretagne indulged in this species of

[1] Vit. S. Teil. Boll. 1 F. 308.

[2] One sentence of the prophecy ascribed by Jeffry to Merlin proves this to be the fact. It says of Arthur, "he shall be celebrated in the popular mouth, and his actions shall be *food* to those who narrate them." Jeffry, l. vii. c. 3. and Alanus, p. 22. Jeffry tells us, in the first chapter of his work, that the actions of Arthur and other British kings were celebrated by many people, and were recited from memory.

[3] The first four sections of the Mabinogion, which means literally Tales for Youth, are the Story of Pwyll Prince of Dymed — The Story of Bran the Blessed — The Story of Manawydan — The Story of Math, the Son of Mathonwy. All these tales are singular and original. But the most elaborate of all, is the Tale of Peredur, which is indeed a regular romance of Arthur, but full of Welsh costume. It is a work of the middle ages; but has not so ancient an air as some of the others.

composition is clear, from Bretagne having been made the scene of so many of the old romances. That such tales existed, and were dear to all ranks of people, in the sixth century, seems intimated by a passage in Gildas, who chides the British clergy of that age, for being slow to hear the precepts of the saints, "but strenuous and intent to listen to idle things, and the *foolish fables* of secular men."[1] This seems to allude to the compositions of the Bards; and of these, rather to their narrative tales, than to their elaborate poems. The strange poem of Taliesin, called the Spoils of Annwn, implies the existence of mythological tales about Arthur[2]; and the frequent allusions of the old Welsh Bards, to the persons and incidents which we find in the Mabinogion, are further proofs that there must have been such stories in circulation amongst the Welsh.

That in the sixth and seventh centuries, there were Bards in Armorica and Wales, who descended from their bardic character, to gain popularity and subsistence by telling stories and amusing the people, seems to be confirmed by a satire of Taliesin; which expresses the most decided hostility to such wandering Bards, or Minstrels.

It may amuse the curious to translate the poem, which describes the ordinary Minstrels not inaccurately, though satirically;

GALL FROM THE BARDS.

"The minstrels (cler) exercise themselves in false customs
Their praise is not in the regular melody;
They sing the fame of insipid heroes;
They are always diffusing falsehoods;
The commandments, the statutes of God, they break;
Married women by their praise,
With irrational thoughts they greatly deceive;
The beautiful virgins they corrupt,
May they beware how they trust such,—
And rank them with men of truth!
Age and time they consume in vain:
In the night they carouse, in the day they sleep;
Idle, they get food without labour;
They hate the churches, but seek the liquor houses;
The false thieves consent together;
For courts and feasts they enquire;
Every indiscreet discourse they detail;
Every deadly sin they praise;
They wander over all the villages, towns, and lands;
They discourse on every filthy trifle;
They despise the commandments of the Trinity;

[1] Gildas, "ad præcepta sanctorum — oscitantes ac stupidos et ad ludicra et inepta secularium hominum *fabulas* — strenuos et intentos," p. 23.

[2] See Vindication of the Ancient British Poems, p. 239. Some of the persons noticed in this, are the heroes of the first two sections in the Mabinogion.

They respect neither Sundays nor holidays;
They care not for the days of necessity (death);
From every gluttony they refrain not;
Excesses of eating and drinking is what they desire;
Tenths and family offerings they pay not;
The men appointed, they mock!
Birds fly; bees collect honey;
Fishes swim; reptiles creep;
Every thing labours for its subsistence,
Except minstrels, vagrants, and worthless thieves.
Blaspheme not among you teaching, nor the art of song!
For God gives anguish and melancholy
To those whose habit is false purposes,
In mocking the service of Jesus.
Be silent, ye Pos-Bard! unprosperous false ones!
Ye know not to judge between truth and falsehood;
If ye be primary bards of faith,
Of the work of God the artist,
Foretell to your king his misfortunes!
I am a diviner and universal chief of the Bards;
I know every pillar in the caves of the west;
I released Elphin from the stone round tower.
Tell your king what will be his security,
If the Lord of the sea-coast of Rhianedd come,
To avenge iniquity on Maelgwyn of Gwynedd:
On his hair, on his teeth, his eyes; his yellow countenance!
Thus will he work his revenge on Maelgwyn of Gwynedd!"

TALIESIN, p. 26.

This severe invective against the ambulatory Bards, who sought their subsistence by amusing the people, proves the existence of such a set of men at that time. These Bards, whom Taliesin tauntingly calls Pos-Bards, who disregarded the regular canons of bardic melody; and whom he distinguishes so carefully from the Prif-Bards, of whom he was one; were probably the authors of the Mabinogion, and of the romantic tales about Arthur and his friends. This poem of Taliesin and its subject, are alluded to by Phylip Brydydd, who lived about 1200. See his Poems, 1 W. A. p. 377, 378. As I cannot ascertain the exact meaning of the contemptuous term *Pos-Bard*, I have placed the original expression in the text. Brydydd applies Go-veird, or "less than Bards," to a similar class of persons.

To these evidences of the bardic compositions in Bretagne, may be added the important intimations given by Marie de France, to whom M. de la Rue also refers, and whose ancient Poesies in 1820 were published by M. de Roquefort, with a liberal French translation, in two volumes, 8vo. She refers repeatedly to Breton tales, writings, and songs; and she addressed her lays to our Henry III.; and speaks of the Breton compositions.

In her "Lai de Gugemer," she says, "I will briefly relate to

you the tales of which the Bretons have made their lays. According to the *letter and the writing*, I will show you an adventure, which in ancient time happened in little Britain."—Roquefort, p. 50. She ends it with adding, "From this tale the lay of Gugemer was composed, which men recite to the harp and rote."

"It is pleasant to hear the note." p. 112.

This passage shows that the Breton bards sung their lays to the harp.

In her lai d'Equitan, she says, "The Bretons were accustomed to make lays of the adventures they experienced for remembrance, and that they might not be forgotten." —Ib. p. 114. It ends "Thus the Bretons made a lay of it," p. 136.

In the lay, "Des Deux Amants," she mentions here, that "the Bretons made a lay of it," p. 252 and 270, as of Graelent, p. 540.

In her poem of "The Nightingale" she here says the same, p. 914 and 926, and she alludes to these lay-makers as 'ancients,' in one on Melon, p. 366.

In that of Eleduc, she says expressly, that her tale is "from a *very ancient* Breton lay," p. 400 — and adds at its close, "of the adventures of those three, the courteous *ancient* Bretons made a lai to commemorate them that they might not be forgotten." P. 484.

In the lay d'Epine, she speaks of histories of these adventures being in the monastery of St. Aaron in St. Malo: and that they were sung in Bretagne, p. 542: and ends with asserting, that the Bretons made a lay of it, p. 580.

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The fair inference from these facts is, that if there were ancient Breton compositions of bards existing in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it cannot be improbable that Welsh bards in Britain should have made poems in the sixth and seventh centuries. It is this asserted state of their anterior minds, which accounts for their subsequent writings; — for it is inconceivable to me, how a people so rude in political state, life, and manners, as the Welsh were in the middle ages, could have had such compositions as indisputably existed in the twelfth and following centuries, if their ancestors had not greatly cultivated literature, although of that peculiar sort which their remains exhibit. Its originality,—and no other nation has had such an artificial system of versification as their poems exhibit,—nor that triad form into which they have thrown their thoughts and historical facts; — this originality is to me a confirming testimony of their genuineness.

VI. That Aneurin, Taliesin, Llywarch Hên, and Merdhin, were British bards, who lived in the sixth century, and who left poems like those already mentioned to have been published as theirs.

If these authors had been Persians, instead of Britons, to what authorities should we have referred for information concerning

them? Unquestionably to Persian writers — that is, to the writers of the country where they resided — to writers in the language which they used.

What information shall we be able to obtain concerning Calidas, the author of Sacontala, a Sanscreet drama, but from Sanscreet writers? By what authorities could we examine the genuineness of any writings ascribed to Con-fu-tse, but by Chinese? If any thing could be found about them in the literature of the nations bordering on China, it would be an additional treasure, but it would not be deemed an indispensable requisite. It is therefore obvious, that, from the very nature of the case, we must expect to find our proofs of the existence and writings of the Welsh bards, in Welsh authors. It is from among the people for whom they were written, and by whom only they were read or valued, that we must deduce their attestations. We cannot expect to find them noticed by Anglo-Saxons, whom they hated, dreaded, and shunned; and who, as I have already shown, though sufficiently barbarous themselves, yet thought they had a right to stigmatize Welsh words as barbarous expressions. If Bede had understood Welsh, he would not have disgraced his taste by such large extracts from Gildas. Bede has neither mentioned the Welsh bards nor the Saxon poets of his time, except the two who were monks; I mean Cedmon and Aldhelm.

It would not be very easy to prove the existence of any individual poet of these distant periods. There were both Frankish and Saxon poets, but their names have not appeared in history, and cannot now be recovered. How many of the poets and minstrels of Europe are only known by some lays having been transmitted to us under their names; but of their existence what external evidence can be brought?

There is a very long and curious Saxon poem in existence, which of course must have had an author, and have been written in the Saxon times; and yet the poem is mentioned in no writing that has survived to us, nor is the name of its parent known. It is a poem in forty sections, and occupying 140 MS. pages. It describes the wars which Beowulf, a Dane of the Scyldinga race, waged against the Reguli of Sweden. It is in the Cotton library, Vitellius, A. 15. Wanley calls it a tractatus nobilissimus — an egregium exemplum of the Anglo-Saxon poetry; and so it is. But if any one should take it into his head to pronounce it to be a forgery, and should call upon its advocates to prove its genuineness, how could this be done by any external evidence? How could it be defended by facts taken from other authors, when no other writing mentions it? It could only be supported by some arguments from the antiquity of the writing; from its internal evidence, and the improbability of any person having had sufficient inducements to commit the fraud.

I put these observations, merely to show the difficulty of proving even those compositions to be genuine, which no one will dispute. — Greater proofs, in favour of the Welsh bards, must not

be expected, than such as the nature of the case will admit us to obtain.

Now the reader will have the goodness to recollect the numerous citations made in some pages preceding from the Welsh bards of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Most of these were so many distinct assertions of the existence of these four ancient bards. In most of them, one or other of these bards were quoted by name, and consequently such passages are so many proofs of the belief of their authors, that these ancient bards existed. To say that these witnesses were Welshmen, cannot invalidate their testimony; because, as I have already intimated, by whom can we expect to find the ancient Welsh bards quoted, but by Welshmen?

We cannot expect to find these Welsh bards noticed by the Anglo-Saxons. I have already given a very striking proof of the contempt of the Anglo-Saxons for the Welsh language, by citing a charter, in which a Welsh word (which was familiarly in use as an epithet of royalty, and sometimes even as an epithet of the Deity,) was expressly denounced as *barbarous*. I will now adduce a cruel instance of the hatred of the Welsh towards the Anglo-Saxons. I take it from the ancient Welsh chronicler, Caradoc Llangarvan.

"The year of Christ, 959, Owain, son of Hoel dda, destroyed the choir of Saint Illtud, in Gorwennydh, *because* he found in it learned men of the *Saxon* nobility."

Oed Crist, 949, y torres Owain ab Hywel Dda, gor Llan Illtud yng Ngorwenydd achaws cael ynddi lenogion pendevig o Saeson. —Carad. Ll. 2 *Arch.* p. 490.

If the animosity between these two nations produced such effects as these, it will be vain to look for attestations of any part of Welsh literature among the Anglo-Saxons. The singular fact of Bede writing the history of this island, without any other British documents than the poor declamation of Gildas, which happened to be in Latin, is a sufficient indication that Welsh literature and traditions were not known out of Wales. The Normans were as unacquainted with it.

The circumstances with which these ancient bards are mentioned in the poetical passages, already cited, will, if duly attended to, be found to warrant the chronology which I have given to them. Thus, one states Merdhin and Taliesin as contemporaries, and another mentions Merdhin as having been present in the battle of Arderydd, which we know from other documents to have occurred in the sixth century. Another makes Taliesin contemporary with Elfin, whom the Welsh literature places in this century. Llywarch is mentioned as the son of Elidir Lydanwyn, who flourished about this period.

But the ancient Welsh bards are also mentioned in other compositions.

The name of Nennius is well known to us, though his exact chronology is not certain. His editor, Gale, places him in the seventh century. He may have belonged to the ninth.

The ancient and beautiful MS. of his work, in the Cotton library[1], contains a part which is wanting in other MSS. This is not uncommon to ancient MSS. The addition in the Cotton MS. is a regular unbroken continuation of the preceding writing, in the same handwriting, with no interruption of line. The first part of the addition is a genealogy, and the latter is some unconnected notices of British and Saxon history. This part may have been his quotation from a preceding author, or it may be the addition of a subsequent copyist. It suits the broken hints and disorderly composition of the former part, and is so far like the style of Nennius. But whether it be his or not, it is, at least, a very ancient composition.

The author's testimony to three of these bards is decisive. I will first give his words, as originally, but corruptly printed, and afterwards the passage, as properly amended by Evans.

In speaking of incidents in the sixth century, he says, "Item Talhearn Talanguen in poemate claruit et Nuevin et Taliesin et Bluchbar et Cian qui vocatur Gueinchguant simul uno tempore in poemate Britannico claruerunt."[2] In this imperfect state of the passage, we see Taliesin clearly mentioned among other bards, who flourished at the same time. Two of these others, the Welsh also now recognise, Talhaiarn[3], and Cian.[4] They had bards of this name; but no Nuevin, and no Bluchbar. The emendation of Evans, consists in correcting the names of Nuevin and Bluchbar, into Aneurin and Llywarch, of the justness of which, there can be no doubt. It is obvious, that the transcriber mistook a v for an r in Aneurin, which are often very similar in MSS. It is as probable, that Bluchbar was an error of the copyist for Llywarch. So in the surnames of Talhaiarn and Cian. They are also mis-written, and should be not Talanguen, but Tatangwn; not Gueinchguant, but Gwyngwn.

[1] Vesp D. 21.

[2] Gale, xv. Script. Vol. III. p. 116.

[3] "Hast thou heard the saying of Talhaiarn
To Arthur, the pusher of the spear:
'There is none mighty but God.'"

A glyweisti cwedyl Talhaiarn
Wrth Arthur yrthwaew tryzarn
Namyn Duw nid oes gadarn. *Engl. Clyw.*

The Book of Bardism thus states another fragment of this bard:

THE PRAYER OF TALHAIARN.

"O God, grant thy protection; and in thy protection, strength; and in strength, discretion; and in discretion, justice; and in justice, love; in love, to love God; and in loving God, to love all things."

Talhaiarn is also mentioned by Taliesin in his Angar Cyvyndawd, p. 35 and 36.

[4] Cian is mentioned by Aneurin:

"The son of Cian, from the stone of Gwyngwyn." P. 2.

Maban y Gian o vaen Gwyngwyn.

And by Taliesin,

"When Cian had
Praised many."
Kian pan ddarfu
Lliaws gyvolu. P. 34.

The probability that the emendations made by Evans are proper, is apparent, when we see the incorrect manner in which other names are written in the same part. Thus our Penda is written Pantha;

| | |
|---|---|
| Oswy, | Osguid, and Osbui. |
| Anna, | Onnan, |
| Oswald, | Osguald. |

The British Urien, Urbgen; and for Deira and Bernicia, we have Deur Oberneich.

The passage, which we have cited, as amended by Evans, stands thus:

"Item Talhaiarn Tatangwn in poemate claruit et Aneurin et Taliesin et Llywarch et Cian qui vocatur Gwyngwn simul uno tempore in poemate Britannico claruerunt."

I consider this, as one authority, very respectable from its antiquity, for the existence of Aneurin, Taliesin, and Llywarch, as distinguished poets, and as contemporaries.

2nd. There is another curious attestation of Taliesin in an ancient MS. of the laws of Howel Dha, in the Welsh school library. The writing has the character of the twelfth century. It has a passage which is not in the printed copy, and which, on mentioning the privileges of the men of Arvon, cites Taliesin by name thus:

Ac y cant Dalyesin
Kygleu wrth wres eu llawneu
Gan Run yn rudher bydyneu
Gwyr Arvon rudyon yn rodiheu.[1]

"And so Taliesin sang:
Behold, by the wrath of their swords,
With Rhun amid the tumult of armies,
The men of Arvon red, and panting."

This is an important passage. It proves three things: that Taliesin was a poet; that he left poems on battles, which survived him; and that he was of such celebrity, that one of his historic poems was quoted in a legal work. I am not certain that the poem has been preserved, in which these lines exist.

3d. To the existence, and high consideration, of Taliesin and Merdhin, there is another evidence in Jeffrey of Monmouth, who lived in the twelfth century. Jeffrey has written a Latin poem on the life of Merdhin, whom he calls Merlin. It contains some passages of harmonious versification, and many very prosaic. It has not yet been printed, but is in MS. in the Cotton library, Vespasian, E. 4. It is addressed to his friend the Bishop of Lincoln. It begins thus:

Vatadici vatis rabiem, musam que jocosam
Merlini cantare paro, tu corrige carmen
Gloria Pontificum.

[1] See Welsh Archaiology, vol. iii. p. 384, in which this MS. is printed.

After an introduction, it states the divisions of some of the British princes, and their conflict.

Contigit interea plures certamen habere
Inter se regni proceres, bello que feroci
Insontes populos devastavisse per urbes.
Dux Venedetorum Peredurus bella gerebat
Contra Guennolonum Scotiæ qui regna regebat.
Jamque dies aderat, bello prefixa; ducesque
Astabant campo, decertabant que catervæ,
Amborum pariter miseranda cæde ruentes.
Venit ad bellum Merlinus cum Pereduro;
Rex quoque Cumbrorum, Rodarchus, sævus uterque.

I will beg permission of the reader to lay before him some more lines, as well because the poem is not in the hands of the public, as also because it intimates some of the striking circumstances of Merdhin's life.

It states, that in the battle Merlin's kinsman fell. His grief at this incident, is represented as admitting of no consolation, and he flies maddening to the woods.

Evocat e bello socios Merlinus, et illic
Precepit in varia fratres sepelire capella;
Replangit que viros nec cessat fundere fletus;
Pulveribus crines sparsit, vestes que rescidit,
Et prostratus humi nunc hac illacque volutat.
Solatur Peredurus eum, proceres que duces que
Nec vult solari, nec verba precantia ferre.
Jam tribus emensis defleverat ille diebus
Respuerat que cibos, tantus dolor usserat illum.
Inde noyas furias cum tot tantisque querelis
Aera complesset, cepit furtimque recedit,
Et fugit ad sylvas nec vult fugiendo videri;
Ingrediturque nemus gaudet que latere sub ornis,
Miratur que feras pascentes gramina saltus;
Nunc has insequitur, nunc cursu præterit illas.
Utitur herbarum radicibus, utitur herbis;
Utitur arboreo fructu, morisque rubeti.
Fit Sylvester homo, quasi sylvis deditus esset.
Inde per æstatem totam nulli que repertus,
Oblitus que sui cognatorum que suorum
Delituit sylvis, obductus more ferino.

In exact conformity with this account of his madness, Merdhin, in his Avellenau, which we have, and which is one of the poems in question, exclaims,

"I am a wild, terrible screamer, affliction wounds me—raiment covers me not."

From these passages of Jeffrey, we get these particulars:

1. The chronology of Merdhin. He is drawn in company with Rodarchus, King of Cumbria, who reigned in the sixth century.

2. That he was a poet, and warrior.
3. That the death of near relations, in battle, occasioned his frenzy.
4. That he fled wild to the woods.
5. That he obtained the surname of Sylvester. All these particulars harmonize with the poems ascribed to him, and with the Welsh traditions about him.

I will quote next two passages from the poem which mentions Merdhin's wish to see Taliesin, and that Taliesin came to him.

O dilecta Soror, Thelgesino que venire
Precipe, namque loqui desidero plurima secum.
Venit enim noviter de partibus Armoricanis,
Dulcia que dedicit sapienti dogmata Gildæ. P. 124.

Venerat interea Merlinum visere vatem
Tunc Talyesinus. P. 125.

The two bards then sing and prophecy together. Here is a full testimony to the chronology of Merlin and Taliesin. They are stated to be the contemporaries of Gildas, who flourished in the sixth century; and we must remember, that the ancient Welsh poems also mention their conversing together.

The speech of Merlin, in p. 129, looks like a diffuse imitation of the last stanza of the Avallenau. It is the same sentiment, somewhat amplified. The Avallenau says,

"Sweet apple-tree! most sweet its produce;
It grows in the solitude of the wood of Celyddon.
It will be useless to be in competition for its fruit.
Cadwaladyr will come to the conference of the ford of Rheon;
Cynan will be in opposition, in motion upon the Saxons;
The Cymry will be triumphant; their chief illustrious;
Every one will have his right, and Britons will be joyful,
Singing to the horns of acclamation, the hymn of peace and serenity."

Afallen beren beraf ei haeron
A dyf yn argel yn Argoed Celyddon
Cyt ceisier ofer fydd herwydd ei hafon
Yn y ddel Kadwaladr i gynadl rhyd Rheon
Kynan yn erbyn cychwyn ar Saeson
Kymry a oruydd kain wydde dragon
Kaffant pawb ei deithi llawen fi Brython
Kaintor cyrn elwch Kathl heddwch a hinon.
*Afall.* 153.

The passage in Jeffrey is thus:

Merlinus ait—
— — Sic sententia summi
Iudicis extitit, Britones ut nobile regnum
Temporibus multis amittunt debilitate,
Donec ab Armorico veniet temone Conanus,
Et Cadwaladrus Cambrorum dux venerandus;

Qui pariter Scotos Cambros et Cornubienses,
Armoricos que viros sociabunt fœdere firmo;
Amissum que suis reddente diadema colonis
Hostibus expulsis renovato tempore Bruti,
Tractabunt que suas sacratas legibus urbes,
Incipiunt reges iterum superare remotos,
Et sua regna sibi certamine subdere fato. P. 129.

This is such a palpable imitation of the Avallenau, especially if it be considered that Merlin is made to express it, that I cannot doubt that Jeffrey had it in his recollection; and if so, the Avallenau must have existed as Merlin, or Merdhin's before Jeffrey.

This is the passage to which it would seem that Golyddan alluded, when he quoted Merdhin as predicting the restoration of the Britons.[1] To this, also, I am induced to believe Llywarch P. Moch referred, when he cited Merdhin to the same sentiment.[2]

We may also remark of this conversation, which Jeffrey states between Merdhin and Taliesin, that one of the Welsh poems, preserved as Taliesin's, is a dialogue between him and Merdhin.[3]

But Merdhin, who is indifferently called by his three surnames, Caledonius, Wyllt, and Sylvester, of which the last two are synonymous, is frequently mentioned by Giraldus Cambrensis, who lived in the twelfth century. (See his Tracts, published by Camden in his Anglica Normannica, &c. p. 870, 761, 839.) Giraldus says he was called Caledonius, from the wood in which he prophesied; and Sylvester, because, falling into madness, he fled to a wood, and remained there till his death. (p. 870.)

But all this impressive combination of facts is not the whole of the testimony, which bears upon this curious subject.

The Welsh have a very singular collection of historical facts, which they call TRIADS. Three events, which have an analogy in some point or other, are arranged together. It is certainly a very whimsical mode of commemorating events, but the actions of man are full of caprice. The fanciful rudeness of the plan, may discredit the taste or judgment of its authors; but the veracity of the statements is not affected by the singularity of the form. If the Welsh have never had a Livy, or a Thucydides; if they have made triads, instead of histories, we may blame the misdirection of their genius; but we cannot try the authenticity of a record by its taste and elegance, or what will become of our special pleading, our bills in equity, and our acts of parliament?

I put these observations to the judgment of the reader, because a gentleman has seriously adduced the oddity of the form of the

[1] See before, p. 468. [2] See before, p. 479.

[3] Arch. p. 48.

Two years after the above was published, Mr. G. Ellis, in 1805, printed a summary of the Latin poem of Jeffrey, in his specimens of early English metrical romances, vol. i. p. 73—85.

He was pleased to consider the Vindication as a successful defence of the Welsh bards.

triads, as a sufficient objection to their historical verity.[1] It is certainly a new discovery in criticism, that excellence of composition is a test of historical truth. If this principle be admitted, then the tales of Hawkesworth, and the novels of Mad. D'Arblay, must be accredited as historical documents, because their composition is admirable, while the venerable, but rude and rustic chronicles of our ancestors must be discredited for their barbarism. On this principle, Jeffrey of Monmouth has written authentic history, because his style has been found pleasing; while our ancient Bede must sink into oblivion for ever, because much absurdity and much puerility may be traced in his legends.

But there can be no doubt, that, on maturer reflection, the author of the critique will see the impropriety of his observation; because (independent of other remarks) it must not be forgotten that the critical merit of any composition must depend, in some measure, on its use and object. Now the object of the triads, was to commemorate the events they state, and the obvious use of the form, was to enable the memory to retain them more easily. A triad is an artificial association of three unconnected events, for the purpose of aiding the memory. If the natural associations of events, according to their chronology, was sufficient to make them be recollected, why were such laborious devices as Grey's Memoria Technica invented? Has the critic forgotten the elaborate arts of the Roman orators to assist their memory? Did they not connect their topics with various obects before them when haranguing, and use other artificial associations to hinder forgetfulness? The Druids, we learn from Cæsar, made their pupils commit their tuition to memory; and that the ancient Britons should continue the custom, and should use the form of triads to assist the memory, cannot be thought either absurd or inconsistent.

I hope the reader will pardon me for a moment's digression, if I attempt to show that the form of triads is by no means so "remarkably foreign to good sense." I cannot do this better, than by citing a few of the Welsh poetical triads, which the youths, who aspired to be bards, were directed to commit to memory, to direct their judgment, and assist their composition. Surely they will be allowed to contain many valuable observations, expressed with singular brevity.

The three foundations of genius: the gift of God, human exertion, and the events of life.

The three first requisites of genius: an eye to see nature, a heart to feel it, and a resolution that dares follow it.

[1] "The very form and feature of the Welsh triads, to select one example, would be contemplated as a proclamation of absurdity, if it occurred in any other language; for what can be more puerile than to build a variety of historical facts upon the number three? It certainly requires no knowledge, either of the Irish or of the Welsh languages, to pronounce a judgment upon productions of this kind; and our regard for *historical truth* must induce us to *censure* the author who shall build on such foundations."—Critical Review, vol. xxxiii. New Arr. p. 122. The quantity of moral wisdom and valuable thought in the triads, published in the third volume of the Welsh Archaiology, will show that peculiarity of manner and great intellectual excellence are very combinable circumstances.

The three things indispensable to genius: understanding, meditation, and perseverance.

The three things that ennoble genius: vigour, discretion, and knowledge.

The three tokens of genius: extraordinary understanding, extraordinary conduct, and extraordinary exertion.

The three things that improve genius: proper exertion, frequent exertion, and successful exertion.

The three things that support genius: amiable manners, scientific learning, and pure morals.

The three things that will ensure praise: prosperity, social acquaintance, and applause.

The three qualifications of poetry: endowment of genius, judgment from experience, and felicity of thought.

The three pillars of judgment: bold design, frequent practice, and frequent mistakes.

The three pillars of learning: seeing much, suffering much, and studying much.

The three pillars of happiness: to suffer contentedly, to hope that it is coming, to believe that it will arrive.

The three ornaments of thought: perspicuity, correctness, and novelty.

The three embellishments of song: fine invention, happy subject, and a masterly harmonious composition.

The three properties of song: correct fancy, correct order, and correct metre.

The three ends of song; to improve the understanding, to improve the heart, and to soothe the reflection.

The three things which constitute a poet: genius, knowledge, impulse.

The three honours of a poet: strength of imagination, profundity of learning, and purity of morals.[1]

I would ask the reader, if these triads do not contain much wisdom, and also express it with emphatic conciseness?

But it is the triads which are called historical, which furnish attestations of the four bards above-mentioned.

The historical triads have been obviously put together at very different periods. Some appear very ancient. Some allude to circumstances about the first population, and early history of the island, of which every other memorial has perished. The triads were noticed by Camden with respect. Mr. Vaughan, the antiquary of Hengurt, refers them to the seventh century. Some may be the records of more ancient traditions, and some are of more recent date. I think them the most curious, on the whole, of all the Welsh remains.

Lhwyd states that there are two MSS. of these historical triads. One in the red book of Hergest, imperfect, written on parchment

[1] These triads are in the ancient MS. called the Book of Bardism. I select them from Mr. Owen's preface to his Llywarch Hên, with a few slight variations in the translation.

in the fourteenth century. It consists of two chapters. One simply called Trioedh, or triads. The other, entitled Trioedh y meirch, the triad of the horses.

Another MS. of the triads, written about the same time, is in the Hengurt library. There are many other MSS. of the triads in the Welsh collections. The following extract from the preface of the editors of the Welsh Archaiology, may not be inapplicably cited.

"The triads may be considered amongst the most valuable and curious productions preserved in the Welsh language; and they contain a great number of memorials of the remarkable events which took place among the ancient Britons. Unfortunately, however, they are entirely deficient with respect to dates; and, considered singly, they are not well adapted to preserve the connection of history. Yet, a collection of triads, combined together as these are, condense more information into a small compass, than is to be accomplished perhaps by any other method; and consequently, such a mode of composition is superior to all others for the formation of a system of tradition."

The historical triads distinctly and expressly mention all the bards whose works we defend.

TRIAD 92d.

The three chief bards of the Isle of Britain:

"Merdhin Emrys;
Merdhin, the son of Morvryn, and
Taliesin, the chief of the Bards."[1]

Tri phrif fardd Ynys Prydain.
Merddin Emrys, Merddin mab Morfryn, a
Thaliesin ben Beirdd.

TRIAD.

The three princely bulls of the Isle of Britain:

"Elmur, son of Cadair;
Cynhaval, son of Argad;
Avaon, son of *Taliesin*. All three were sons of *bards*."[2]

Tri tharw unben Ynys Prydain
Elmur mab Cadair
Cynhaval mab Argad.
Afaon mab Taliesin. Tri meib beirdd oeddynt ell tri.

71st.

The three free and discontented guests of Arthur's court:

"*Llywarch Hên*, Llemenig, and Heledd."[3]

Tri thrwyddedawg ac ansoddawc Llys Arthur.
Llywarch Hên, Lemenig, a Heledd.

[1] Welsh Archai. vol. ii. [2] Ib. p. 4.
[3] Ib. p. 16.

86th.

The three counselling knights of the court of Arthur:

" Cynon, son of Clydno, of Eidyn;
Aron, son of Cynvarch;
and *Llywarch Hên,* son of Elidir Lydanwyn."[1]

Tri chyngoriad farchog Llys Arthur:
Cynan ab Clydno Eiddyn,
Aron ab Cynfarch,
a Llywarch Hên ab Elidir Lydanwyn.

38th.

The three accursed deeds of the Isle of Britain.

" Eidyn, the son of Einygan, who slew *Aneurin,* of splendid panegyric, monarch of the Bards; Llawgad Trwm, from the borders of Eidyn, who slew Avaon, the son of *Taliesin;* and Llovan Llawddino, who killed Urien, the son of Cynvarch."[2]

Tair ansad gyflafan Ynys Prydain: Eidyn a laddawd Aneurin Gwawtrydd medyrn beirdd; Llawgat Trwm, bargawt Eidyn a laddawd Afaon mab Taliesin; a Llofan Llawdinno a laddawd Urien mab Cynfarch.

39th.

The three accursed blows of the battle-axe of the Isle of Britain:

" The blow of Eidyn, on the head of *Aneurin;*
The blow on the head of Iago, the son of Beli;
and the blow on the head of Golyddan, the Bard."

Teir anfad fwyellawt Ynys Prydain;
Bwyellawt Eidyn ym pen Aneurin,
A'r fwyellawt ym pen Iago mab Beli,
A'r fwyellawt ym pen Golyddan fardd.

These two last triads are very curious, as they not only attest the existence of Aneurin, but state the particular fact of his violent death, the criminal, and even part of his genealogy.

Thus we perceive that the triads expressly attest the existence of Aneurin, Taliesin, Llywarch Hên, and Merdhin.

I think, from all the evidence assembled under this head, I am entitled to say, "That Aneurin, Taliesin, Llywarch Hên, and Merdhin, were British Bards, who lived in the sixth century, and who left poems like those before mentioned." But although the Britons should be allowed to have such Bards at this period, yet, in order that their works should have descended to us, it is requisite that we know,

V. That the Britons had the use of letters at this æra.

I believe that no antiquary doubts this fact. The numerous Roman inscriptions, which have been found in the island, prove

[1] Welsh Archai. vol. ii. p. 18. [2] Ibid.

that letters were used in Britain very commonly by the Romans; and it would be somewhat miraculous, if this civilized people should have continued so long in the island without imparting their alphabet to the natives. But there are also several inscriptions yet extant, which were made by the Britons in these centuries. I will only refer to two. One is the inscription on the monumental stone raised by Samson, who lived in the sixth century[1], to the memory of Illtutus. It was found in the churchyard of Lantwit-Major, in Glamorganshire, and may be seen in Camden's Britannia, under that county. The other is the inscription on the stone which Mr. Edward Williams, the ingenious Welsh Bard, now living, induced by a curious local tradition, searched for in 1789, and dug out of the same church-yard. It purports, that Samson prepared it as a memorial of king Iuthahel, and another. It was left on the ground, after the discovery, till the month of August 1793, when Mr. Williams procured assistance to erect it against the east side of the porch, where it may now be seen.[2]

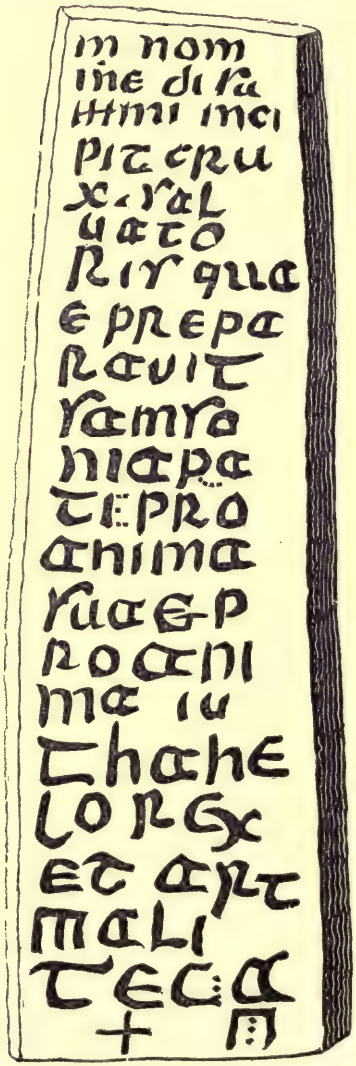
[1] He was born about 420.

[2] It may not be uninteresting to give a more particular account of the finding of this stone in Mr. Williams's own words, as it is a singular instance of the fidelity of tradition; I may also add, of Mr. Williams's intelligent curiosity.

"In the summer of 1789, I dug out of the ground in *Lantwit* church-yard a large monumental stone; it is the shaft of a cross, and its history affords a remarkable instance of the fidelity of popular tradition. About forty years ago, a very old man, his name *Richard Punter*, was then living at *Lanmais, juxta Lantwin*. He, though only a shoemaker, was more intelligent than most of his own class; he had read history more than many, was something of an antiquary, and had stored his memory with a number of interesting popular traditions. I was then about twelve or fourteen years of age; like him, fond of history and antiquities. He one day showed me a spot on the east side of the porch of the old *church at Lantwit*, where, he said, a large monumental stone lay buried in the ground, with an inscription on it to the memory of two kings. The tradition of the accident which buried it in the ground, he gave as follows: Long ago, before the memory of the oldest persons that ever he knew (and he was then about eighty), for their knowledge of it was only traditional, there was a young man at *Lantwit*, commonly called *Will the Giant*. He, at seventeen years of age, was seven feet, seven inches high; but, as is usually the case in premature and supernatural growth, he fell into a decline, of which he died at that age. He had expressed a wish to be buried near the monumental stone which stood by the porch; his wishes were complied with; the grave was dug, necessarily much larger than graves are usually, so that one end of it extended to the foot of the stone that was fixed in the ground. Just as the corpse had been laid in the ground, the stone gave way and fell into the grave, filling it up nearly. Some had a very narrow escape for their lives; but as the stone was so large as not to be easily removed, it was left there, and covered over with earth. After I had heard this traditional account, I had a great desire to dig for this stone, and many times endeavoured to engage the attention of several, and their assistance; but my idea was always treated with ridicule. In the year 1789, being at work in *Lantwit church*, and being one day unable to go on with my business for want of assistance, it being then the height of corn harvest, and not a man to be found that could give me the wanted assistance, I employed a great part of one day in digging in search of this stone, and found it. I cleared away all the earth about it. Mr. Christopher Wilkins, and Mr. David Jones, two very respectable gentlemen

But if there were bards in those days, who knew the use of writing; yet, is it likely that any writings of this distant, rude, and

farmers, on seeing this stone, ordered their men to assist me, and we with great difficulty got it out of the ground, and on it we found the following inscription:




The dimensions of this stone are in length nine feet; breadth at top twenty-seven inches; at bottom twenty-eight inches; thickness fifteen inches."

turbulent period, should have survived to our times? It must therefore be proved,

VI. That writings of the sixth century have come down to us undisputed.

This is an easy task. We have still extant a numerous collection of poems, by Venantius Fortunatus, who lived in the sixth century in France. We have the history of Gregory of Tours, his contemporary. We have the heroic poem on the creation, by Dracontius, a Spanish presbyter, also of the sixth century. We have the little poems of Columbanus, the Irishman. The poems of Alcimus Avitus, the archbishop of Vienne, on Genesis and Exodus. The works of Ennodius, bishop of Ticenensis. The historical poems, from the Old Testament, of Rusticus Helpidius, physician to the king of the Goths; and the very voluminous works of Pope Gregory; all authors of the sixth century. We have also Anglo-Saxon laws of the same times, which have reached us.

But it can be also shewn,

VII. That even writings of a Briton of the sixth century are in our hands, and suspected by no one.

This author is Gildas, a Briton; and his works are in most libraries. He wrote in Latin a little work of small merit on the British history, and an invective against the British kings and clergy, which have come safely down to us. If these Latin compositions of Gildas could weather, unhurt, all the storms of time, surely the compositions of Welsh bards, on the most interesting of all subjects to Welshmen, their struggles against their invaders, might be as fortunate. There was nothing but a little historical curiosity to preserve the reproaching monk; but all the passions, the prejudices, and the reason of Wales, were interested by their bards, and ensured perpetuity to their lays. And why should time have inveterately persecuted these poems more than the works of Gildas, and the other authors whom I have named? Why should the Franks have been more interested to preserve the poems of Fortunatus, than the Welsh to perpetuate those of Aneurin or Taliesin? And if we consider the numerous Latin poems of this period, which have been transmitted to us by the monks, where is the wonder that Welsh poetry should have been transmitted to us by Welshmen?

But it can be also proved,

VIII. That in the twelfth century there were writings of old British bards extant in Welsh, which were then called *ancient* and *authentic*, and that Giraldus then found some written compositions ascribed to Merdhin, and which he believed to be his.

The evidence of Giraldus Cambrensis, who lived in the twelfth century, is complete and decisive on this subject: he says, in his description of Wales, "This also seems remarkable to me, that the Cambrian bards, and singers or reciters, have the genealogy of the aforesaid princes in *their ancient and authentic* books, but also written in Welsh."[1]

In this passage, Giraldus, who was born 1150, attests, that in his days the Welsh bards had authentic books, which were written in Welsh, and which were in that age deemed ancient. What is the meaning of ancient, unless it denotes a period some centuries earlier than that in which he wrote?

Giraldus does not say merely that they had ancient genealogies. He speaks of the genealogies but as a *part* of the contents of these ancient and authentic books, and these books, too, were books of the *bards*. They are not mentioned generally as being ancient Welsh books in Wales, but ancient and *authentic* books, which were in the possession of the Welsh bards and singers. To remark that the Cambrian bards had these books, and to call them *their books*, seem to me to intimate that the books were written by *bards*. It will be at least curious to recollect the evidence of Posidonius before the first century, that the Celtic bards sung the γενος, the genealogy of their chiefs: because, if Giraldus found the Welsh bards to have ancient books on the same topic in the twelfth century, the fact mentioned by Posidonius sanctions, very forcibly, our arguments of the antiquity of the bardic profession in this country, and gives additional credibility to what is stated in favour of the ancient Welsh literature.

In another passage, Giraldus says that King Henry the Second heard concerning Arthur, "from an *ancient* historical singer."[2] As I cannot inflict on Giraldus the disgrace of not knowing the meaning of the words he uses, I must presume, from this authority, that the ancient British had historical singers, that is, ancient bards who had left historical poems, which, in the days of Henry the Second, were deemed ancient, and referred to, and which, therefore, must have been some centuries old in that age.

We have another witness to the existence of old British authors in the twelfth century. William of Malmsbury, who lived in this period, says, "It is read in the *ancient* accounts of the actions of the Britons." He adds, "these things are from the *ancient books* of the Britons."[3] If such things as ancient British books had not

[1] Hoc etiam mihi notandum videtur quod Bardi Cambrenses et cantores seu recitatores genealogiam habent prædictorum principum in libris eorum antiquiis et autenticis sed etiam Cambrice scriptam. — Gir. Camb. *Descrip.* p. 883.

[2] Rex Angliæ Henricus secundus, sicut ab historico cantore Britone audiverat antiquo. — Giraldus, as cited by Leland in his Assertio Arturi, p. 52.

[3] Legitur in antiquis Britonum gestis — hoc de antiquis Britonum libris sunt. — Wil. Malm. 3 Gall, Scrip. p. 295.

The ancient monk of Malmsbury, quoted by Leland, says of Henry, "Rex autem hoc ex gestis Britonum et eorum *cantoribus historicis* frequenter audiverat." — Ass. Art. 50.

been extant in Malmsbury's days, I cannot persuade myself that he would twice have asserted such a fact.

I believe the book of Jeffrey of Monmouth, who lived also in the twelfth century, to be his own composition, and to abound with fable. But I think he would not have been foolish enough to have asserted, that he had translated from a very ancient book[1] in the British tongue, which the archdeacon of Oxford had given him, unless there had been "*very ancient books*" of the Britons in existence in his time, that is, in the twelfth century.

I think I cannot more decisively prove that there were extant, in the time of Giraldus, poems of the sixth century, and of Merdhin, than by a literal translation of some other passages from him, on this subject.

These passages are in his "Prologus in librum tertium Vaticinium," which is printed by Usher in his "Veterum Epistolarum Hibernicarum Sylloge."

"In the former books we inserted the predictions of Merlin Caledonius and Merlin Ambrosius, in suitable places, as occasion required. Ambrosius has been explained[2], but *Caledonius having not yet put off his British barbarism* has remained, to our times, obscure and little known. Hence it seemed to concern our diligence to draw him, by scrutinizing research, from his ancient and hidden shades, into a public and fairer splendour."[3]

"The fame only of this Merlin, surnamed Caledonius or Silvester, has been hitherto very distinguished. The memory of his prophecies had been retained among the British bards, whom they call poets, verbally by many — in writing by very few."[4]

"Performing, therefore, the office of an interpreter, and with the assistance of some men, skilled in the British language, I faithfully expressed the sentence in every respect word for word, as far as the difference of idiom would admit. But because, as in other works, so in these, the invidious art of the bards adulterating nature, has added to the true prophecies many of their own; therefore, having thrown out and reprobated all that breathed the air of modern composition, led by the love of truth alone, the rude and plain simplicity of the ancient style attracted my mind." He proceeds to add, "I have illustrated the darkness of the barbaric tongue with the light of the Latin language."[5]

[1] See him, Ll. c. .

[2] Giraldus apparently alludes here to the oracles of Merlin Ambrosius, inserted by Jeffrey in his history.

[3] Quoniam in prioribus libris Merlini vaticinia tam Caledonii quam Ambrosii locis competentibus, prout res exigebat inseruimus; Ambrosio vero dudum exposito nondum. Caledonius Britannicam exutus barbariem usque ad hoc nostra tempora latuit parum agnitus: nostræ videbatur interesse diligentiæ tam ipsum ab antiquis et occultis scrutabunda inquisitione latebris ut pulchrius elucescat in commune deducere. — Usher, p. 116.

[4] Erat itaque Caledonii Silvestris solum hactenus fama percelebris; a Britannicis tamen Bardis quos poetas vocant, verbo tenus penes plurimos, scripto vero penes paucissimos vaticiniorum ejusdem memoria retenta fuerat. — Ib. p. 116.

[5] Functus igitur interpretis officio peritis quoque linguæ Britannicæ viris mecum

These important passages of Giraldus prove three things,

1st. That there were, in his time, works ascribed to Merdhin, one of the four bards I argue for, which works were in writing and in the British language.

2d. That these works had in his days the character of the age of their author.—I mean that Giraldus, a Welshman, found them difficult in their language.

3d. That this Merdhin was then much famed: that many of the Welsh bards had his compositions by heart, and some, though very few, in writing.

Giraldus also states his belief, that some prophecies were ascribed to Merdhin which he had not written. But he also expresses that he distinguished these interpolations and additions by the modern air of their style.

My opinion is precisely the same with that of Giraldus. The prophetic works ascribed to Merdhin, which have come down to us, are unquestionably either interpolated or surreptitious. The fame of his being a prophet accounts for it.

The external evidence for these bards may be now closed.

I hope that I have proved,

That there were bards among the Britons in the sixth century.
That these four bards, whose works I support, then lived.
That the poems now extant were in MS. in the twelfth century, which MSS. ascribed them to these four ancient bards, and some of which MSS. we have.
That these bards were mentioned, and some of their poems were quoted, or referred to, by many British bards of various ages, from before the twelfth century through the following ages to our times.
That in the twelfth century there were writings of old British bards extant, which were then called ancient and authentic. That Giraldus in that century found some written ancient compositions then ascribed to Merdhin, and which he believed to be his, and that a Welsh bard of the thirteenth century calls a poem of Taliesin "the *Ancient* song of Taliesin."[1]

I have strengthened this train of direct evidence, by showing

That many writings of the sixth century have come down to us.

adhibitis, in quantum idiomatum permisit diversitas, verbo ad verbum plurima, sententias autem in singulis fideliter expressi. Sed quoniam sicut in aliis sic in istis bardorum ars invida naturam adulterans multa de suis tanquam prophetica veris adjecit: cunctis moderni sermonis compositionem redolentibus quasi reprobatis et abjectis sola veritatis amica sermonis antiqui rudis et plana simplicitas diligenter excepta mentem allexit.—Barbaræ linguæ tenebras Latini luce sermonis illustravi.—Usher, p. 117.

[1] See before, p. 485.

That the Britons had then the art of writing; and,
That the writing of a Briton of that age, whose genuineness no one disputes, has confessedly come down to us, and yet the interest to preserve this was inconsiderable in comparison with the feeling which must have operated to perpetuate these poems.

On this evidence I submit, that unless the internal evidence of these poems is very clearly and decisively hostile to their antiquity, no reasonable man can discredit their genuineness. I proceed to consider this branch of my subject under the heads which I have already stated, p. 461, and which seem to me to be the topics that bear most upon the subject.

## THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE:—

I. That the subjects of this poetry could answer no purpose of interest in the twelfth century,

will be obvious to all who inspect them. For what are they? They are poems in praise of warriors who lived and fought in the sixth century. What profit could any one have got by praising the warriors mentioned in the Gododin? And what living chief was interested in the encomiums of Caeawg, Mynydaur, or the other persons mentioned by Aneurin? They form part of no genealogies.—They had not even been Welsh princes.—They were merely warriors in the north parts of the island. What interest could be reaped by any forger taking the trouble to write 920 lines on such an unfortunate conflict as that which is the subject of the Gododin? It must have been forgery for the mere toil of forgery, if it were so. The same may be said of Llywarch's long poem on his Old Age, and his Address to the Cuckow. Nor do I see in what a bard could be benefited in throwing away so many poems on Urien, a Northern chieftain, as Taliesin has done; and, at the same time, leaving unsung so many Welsh kings and warriors, related to the existing princes of the twelfth century.

It appears to me very forcibly,

II. That the subjects of these ancient poems were the most unlikely of all others for a forger to have chosen.

We can perceive at once, why such poems as those of Ossian should be fabricated, even independent of individual advantage. In making a Fingal, an irresistible warrior—an Alexander of the third century who only moves to conquer—whose presence is so decisive of a conflict, that, in compassion to the fame of other warriors, he keeps awhile out of it. In forming such a character there is an obvious gratification of national vanity.

But the poem of Aneurin is one of the greatest humiliations of national vanity that could be exhibited. It celebrates a conflict so disastrous to the Britons, that very few escaped. It inflicts on

them the disgrace of going drunk into the battle. That a bard who had fought in it himself, and had lost the friends whom he extols, should compose his elegiac dirges to their memory I can conceive. But I cannot believe, that if some centuries hence a Frenchman should wish to forge a poem of the present day for French readers, he would choose for his subject the battle of the Nile. I do not think that an Austrian poet, who wished to impose surreptitious poems on his countrymen, would exactly write them on the battles of Hohenlinden or Marengo.

To make fables as Jeffrey has done on a great character like Arthur is conceivable. To describe a British hero as out-doing even an Alexander in military exploits; to make valour wither at his approach, and armies perish before his sword, would have clouded the fame of any poem with a suspicion, which scarcely any degree of evidence could remove. But the Welsh bards exhibit nothing of this sort. If we take up Llywarch, we find his first poem is an elegy on Geraint, a chieftain of Devonshire, who did not drive the Saxons to the sea, as a vainglorious forger would have depicted, but who perished in the battle. Instead of an Ambrosius, whom history would have allowed them to have celebrated—instead of a Vortimer, from whose actions every Briton had a share of glory; we have a prince perpetually applauded who was really so insignificant as to have almost escaped the notice of history. I mean Urien of Reged. A forger would not have chosen such a hero; he would not have thought of him. But it is extremely natural, that such a character, even though obscure, should be praised by the bards whom he patronized. In their eyes and in their gratitude he was great and interesting, though on the theatre of human action he was very inconsiderable.

If a forger had chosen a subject, he would have selected the struggles against Hengist, for they were so far successful as to confine this invader to Kent; he would have selected the heroes who confronted the formidable West Saxons, that established the Anglo-Saxon monarchy; because the contests with them would have inevitably given glory; but he would not have chosen the obscure conflicts in the north, because they were precisely the least interesting and the least noticed in history of the whole.

If these poems appeared to answer any purpose of politics or religion; if they taught any peculiar notions, on either of these subjects, which the passions of the people or the interests of their rulers in the twelfth century, required to have impressed; there would be shown a reason for the forgery.

But the moment we read these poems, we see that no object of this sort could possibly have been in the view of their authors when they composed them. What political purpose could be obtained, what interest advanced, by the praises of the unfortunate Urien, Geraint, or the warriors of the Gododin? Read Merdhin's simple, yet wild and touching complaints on his madness, in his little Avallenau; and let ingenuity discover a single motive, that could have roused any bard to have forged it, or any prince to

have exacted the forgery. Men do not forge without some palpable motive. These poems are so simple and so natural as to discover none.

The decisive remark on this topic appears to me to be, that if Welshmen of the twelfth century had forged these poems, it would have been an inevitable consequence, that Wales and Welshmen would have been the objects extolled. But it is singular, that Wales is scarcely mentioned in them, and the most applauded heroes are not Welshmen. Urien, on whom Taliesin has left ten poems, was from a district of Cumbria. The persons commemorated by Aneurin lived as far north as this, and some more so. Llywarch has indeed given an elegy to Cynddylan and another to Cadwallon; but his longest elegy is to Urien, and another is devoted to a leader in Devonshire. They, of whom Merdhin principally talks, are also from the Northern Britons. To suppose that Welshmen should have forged to perpetuate the celebrity of other Britons, when there was abundance of Welsh heroes who demanded the patriotic lay, is surely an extravagant idea. Bards usually sing for fame and profit; and if they forged, would most probably have had the same things in view. The enemies of these poems must at least admit, that to forge such poems as these, was the most blundering way they could have chosen to the favourite temples of human wishes.

In the sixth century, these poems, besides enshrining the memory of the friends and warlike companions of the bards, must have also had the good effect of stimulating their countrymen to imitate the flattered dead, by resisting bravely the Anglo-Saxon invaders. But this great contest had been over for ages before the twelfth century; it was over before the time of Alfred, and every succeeding Saxon sovereign made the re-establishment of the British monarchy more impossible. But when the Normans had spread themselves over England, and added another warlike race to maintain the possession of the island, it is ridiculous to suppose, that any bard would have forged a prophecy of the Welsh recovering it. At the very period, in which the forgery is placed, not only Wales was prostrate before the king of London, but even Ireland was bending to his sway.

That these poems could not have been written in the twelfth century appears to me to be clear, from

III. The manner in which Arthur is spoken of by them.

The history of Jeffrey, the composition of the twelfth century, shows us how Arthur was in those days considered. The Welsh, compelled to yield their country without hope of recovery, revenged themselves both on the Saxons and on Europe, by creating a phantom of glory, whose gigantic majesty towered above that of every warrior who had appeared since Alexander. It would be a very curious discussion, to trace the first origin of Arthur's fabulous history, and its gradual enlargement, but it would be too digressive from the objects of this essay. I will only express my

opinion, that the apparition either first appeared, or at least acquired its magnitude and its terrors, in Bretagne. I believe Jeffrey to state the fact, when he says, he found the history of Arthur in a book brought from that country. Perhaps, if any of the lays or legends concerning the Daniel Dremrudd, or red visage, the Alexander of Bretagne, could be found, we might meet the prototype of Arthur.

But that Arthur's fame had acquired a gigantic shape in the twelfth century is undoubted. Alanus de Insulis, was born 1109, and he informs us, that if any was heard in Bretagne, to deny that Arthur was then alive, he would be stoned: he says, "Who does not speak of him? he is even more known in Asia than in Britain, as our pilgrims returning from the East assure us, both East and West talk of him. Egypt and the Bosphorus are not silent. Rome, the mistress of the cities, sings his actions. Antioch, Armenia, Palestine, celebrate his deeds."[1]

I will allow to any one, that Alanus may be supposed to write hyperbolically in this passage. But Alanus was neither a Welshman nor a Briton; and therefore is decisive evidence that Arthur's fame had been surprisingly amplified before he wrote.

My argument then is, that if these poems had been forged in the twelfth century, they would have betrayed themselves by their panegyrics on Arthur. Some of them would have been devoted to this favourite of fame. In some the miraculous feats of Jeffrey's history would have appeared. The very contrary, however, is found. Not a tittle of this vast celebrity appears. He is just mentioned as distinguished and no more, and mentioned as any other warrior. I hope it will not be indecorous to cite an observation on this point from my History of the Anglo-Saxons.

"This state of moderate greatness suits the character in which the Welsh bards exhibit Arthur; they commemorate him, but it is not with that excelling glory with which he has been surrounded by subsequent traditions. The song sometimes swells with the actions of a warrior; but it was an age of warriors, and Urien of Reged seems to have employed the harp more than Arthur. Llywarch the aged, who lived through the whole period of slaughter, and had been one of the guests and counsellors of Arthur, yet displays him not in transcendent majesty. In the battle of Llongborth, which Arthur directed, it was the valour of Geraint that arrested the bard's notice; and his elegy, though long, scarcely mentions the commander, whose merit, in the frenzy of later fablers, clouds every other. As his poem was a gift to the dead, it may be supposed to possess less of flattery and more of truth in its panegyric; it speaks of Arthur with respect, but not with wonder; Arthur is simply mentioned as the commander and the conductor of the toil of war, but Geraint is profusely celebrated with dignified periphrasis.

"In the same manner Arthur appears in the Avallenau of

[1] Alanus, p. 22.

Merdhin; he is mentioned as a character well known, but not idolized; yet he was then dead, and all the actions of his patriotism and valour had been performed; not a single epithet is added, from which we can discern him to have been that whirlwind of war, which swept away in its course all the skill and armies of Europe. That he was a courageous warrior is unquestionable; but that he was the irresistible warrior of the British history, from whom kings and nations sunk in panic, is completely disproved by the temperate encomiums of his contemporary bards."[1]

Can any one believe, that Welshmen would have forged the works of the contemporaries of Arthur, and not have taken the opportunity of celebrating their favourite chieftain? Would not this be contrary to human nature? When Homer wrote his Iliad and Odyssey, he made Achilles, Ajax, Diomed, and Ulysses, his applauded heroes. When Virgil penned his Æneid, he gave the lay to the presumed ancestor of the Roman race. When Macpherson wrote his Fingal, his hero was all-conquering and a Highlander.

IV. That the *subjects* and *allusions* of these poems are such as might be expected from their authors.

Aneurin's poem is upon the fatal battle of Cattraeth, in which he had combated. Its melancholy catastrophe was occasioned by the Britons commencing the contest in a state of intoxication. In this poem he seems to have had two principal objects; one was to celebrate the warriors who had fought with him, and whose merit he sings with all the artlessness of sincerity; the other was to impress on the memory of his countrymen the cause of the disaster. It is said, that Homer composed his Iliad to teach the Greeks the ruinous effects of dissension. He may have done so. But it is much more evident, that one great purpose of the Gododin, was to display the mischief of feasting before battle. To impress this conviction with irresistible effect, the bard is perpetually bringing in allusions, very much diversified, to the wine and mead, which had been shared by his countrymen. The whole subject of the Gododin announces its genuineness.

The subjects of the poems of Llywarch Hên, are the deaths of his friend Geraint and of his patrons, Urien, Cynddylan, and Cadwallon, and upon his own old age, and the loss of his children. What can be more natural?

The poems of Taliesen on Urien and Elphin, were in honour of his two patrons. His historical elegies are on the warriors who were known to him. These I think genuine. Of the rest of the poetry ascribed to him, which is so mystical as to seem very fantastical, I can say nothing. I leave it to its fate. It is scarcely worth being rescued, unless its mythological allusions could be illustrated from other sources. They are not now intelligible.

Merdhin's Avallenau is avowedly on the gift of an orchard,

[1] History of Anglo-Saxons, vol. i. pp. 249, 250.

which he had received; but it is full of personal allusions to himself and such of his contemporaries whom he respected or dreaded. Surely all these subjects are natural topics for such bards to have chosen—too natural—too artless, for fraud to have selected.

Much of the lyric poetry of Horace is of this nature. Many of his poems are on Augustus, and some are addressed to Mecænas and others of his contemporaries.

Several remarks may be made on the allusions in these poems.

1. I will not say, that because the author's name appears in the poems ascribed to him, their genuineness is thereby demonstrated. This would be pushing the argument too far. But I may remark, that Phædrus [1], that the ancient Ennius [2], and that the elegant Virgil [3] have inserted their own names in their compositions; our Cowley [4] has done the same. So have the Welsh bards of the twelfth century, Gwalchmai [5], Cyndelw [6], and Llywarch P. Moch.[7] I am, therefore, entitled to say, that to find the name of the author in any poem is to find a circumstance which has often accompanied genuineness, though it does not prove it. Now the ancient Welsh bards have this feature. Then in the poems of Taliesin, the author says,

"I also am Tailesin
Head of the bards of the West."

Minnau yw Taliesin
Ben beirdd y Gorllewin.
*Dyhudd. Elph. Arch.* p. 21.

"I am Taliesin,
With a speech flowing as a diviner."

Mydwyf Taliesin
Areith lif Dewin.
*Canu y Byd Mawr*, p. 25.

In another place he mentions both his name and habitation, which is a peculiarity rather striking.

[1] *Phædri* libellos legere si desideras
Vaces oportet, Eutyche, a negotiis.
PHÆD. *Fab. Prol.* Lib 3.

[2] Adspicite, O civeis, senis *Ennii* imagini formam,
Hic vostrum panxit maxuma facta patrum.
*His Epitaph.*

[3] Illo *Virgilium* me tempore dulcis alebat
Parthenope, studiis florentem ignobilis otî.
*Georg.* iv. 563.

[4] Leave, wretched *Cowley!* leave
Thyself with shadows to deceive.
*Love given over.*

[5] Arch. p. 194. [6] Ib. p. 207. 216. [7] Ib. p. 301. 322. 327.

"And I, also, Taliesin,
Of the banks of the lake Ceirionydd." [1]

A minnau Daliesin
O lan llyn Geirionydd. *Anrec Urien*, p. 51.

So we find Aneurin mentioning himself:

"Inseparable has been lamentation and *Aneurin*."

Anysgarat vu y nad ac Aneurin. *Ib.* p. 9.

And,

"When the earth shall come upon *Aneurin*."

Er pan aeth daiar ar Aneurin. *Ib.* p. 13.

Llywarch Hên also occasionally mentions his own name:

"My wooden crook! be thou a branch contented
To support a mourning old man;
Llywarch—noted for complaints.

"My wooden crook, be thou steady,
And support me better.
Am I not Llywarch, from many remote?"

Baglan bren gangen voddawg
Cynnelyç hen hiraethawg
Llywarç leverydd nodawg.

Baglan bren, bydd ystywell
A'm cynnelyç a vo gwell:
Neud wyv Llywarç lawer pell?
Owen's *Llyw.* p. 120.

"Sweetly sang the birds on the fragrant tree
Over the head of Gwen, before he was covered with sod.
He broke the armour of Llywarch Hên."

Teg yd gan yr aderyn ar berwydd bren,
Uç ben Gwen, cyn ei olo dan dywarç.
Briwai galç Llywarç Hên. Owen's *Llyw.* p. 134.

So Merdhin,

"There was given to nobody at the dawn of day
What was given to *Merdhin* before he became old."

A rodded i neb yn un pylgaint
A roed i *Ferddin* cynnoi henaint.
*Afallen. Arch.* p. 50.

[1] Mr. Owen informs me, that the lake of this name is a few miles west of Llanrwst, in the wildest part of the Snowdon Mountains, in Caernarvonshire. There is a small ruin at one end of the lake, which is still traditionally called the House of Taliesin.

But we certainly gain a material point by having the author's name inserted in a composition. It rescues us from the doubt which must always attend anonymous poetry, whether it may not belong to some other century than that to which we ascribe it. The author's name in a poem narrows the question into this alternative. The poem, then, either must be the genuine work of the author named, or an express forgery made for the purpose of passing to the world as that author's composition. The chances of such a direct wilful forgery, are much fewer than the chances of that possible mistake to which anonymous poetry is liable. But I think that the supposition of a wilful forgery of these poems cannot be supported. I therefore submit that the poems which have the names of these bards, if they were not wilfully forged, must be genuine.

2. That authors, who were contemporaries, should mention each other in their poems, is extremely natural. Thus Horace notices Virgil more than once [1], and Cowley inscribed a poem to Sir William D'Avenant. This is not indeed a seal of genuineness, which cannot be counterfeited, but it does not strike my mind as one of those obvious precautions which a forger of the twelfth century would use. I therefore adduce this circumstance as very favourable to the genuineness of these poems. Thus Aneurin mentions Taliesin:

"I, *Aneurin*, knew
What is known to *Taliesin*,
Who participates in mind."

Mi a wn vi Aneurin
Ys gwyr Taliesin,
Oveg cyvrenhin. *God.* p. 7.

In the same natural manner Taliesin notices Aneurin in his poems:

"*Aneurin!* I know his name,
With his genius of flowing panegyric;
And I am *Taliesin*,
On the borders of the lake of Ceirionydd;
May I be blind in age,
Or in the anguish of death,
If I praise not Urien."

[1] Molle atque facetum
*Virgilio* annuerint gaudentes rure Camoenæ.
Lib. 1. Sat. 7.

Navis, quæ tibi creditum
Debes *Virgilium*. Lib. 1. Carm. 3.

He also mentions Virgil in his Art of Poetry, line 55., and in his journey to Brundusium, line 40.

A wn i enw Aneurin, gwawdrydd awenydd,
A minnau Daliesin
O lan llyn Geirionydd;
Ny daliwyf yn hen
Ym dygyn angau angen
Oni molwyf Urien.

TAL. *Anrec Urien*, p. 51.

So Taliesin composed a dialogue between himself and Merdhin, and thus mentions both in it:

"Since I, Merdhin, am after Taliesin,
Equally common will be my prophecy."

Canys mi Myrtin gwydi Taliesin
Bydded cyffredin fy darogan.

*Ymdidan, Arch.* p. 48.

3. Another trait of genuineness is, that they speak of events which happened in the age in which they lived, as passing under their own eyesight.

Thus Taliesin, on the battle of Gwenystrad, where Urien Reged commanded, who we know flourished in the sixth century, exclaims,

"In the pass of the ford *I saw* the ghost-like men
Dropping their arms in pallid misery."

Yn nrws rhyd *gwelais* i wyr lledruddion
Eirf dillwng rhag blawr gofidon.

"*I saw* Urien's brow covered with fage,
When he attacked the enemy by the white stone of Calysten."

Gweles i ran reodig gan Urien
Pan amwyth ai alon yn llech wen Galysten.

TAL. *Gwenyst*, p. 52.

Llywarch thus frequently shows a personal acquaintance with the events he describes. Thus on Geraint's battle:

At Llongborth *I saw* the noisy tumult,
The glory biers,
And men red from the onsets of the foe.

In Llongborth *I saw* the weapons
Of the warriors dropping blood.

*I saw* the edges striking together,
Men in terror, and blood upon the brow,
From Geraint, the great son of his father.

In Llongborth *I saw* tumultuous struggling
On the stones—ravens at their feast,
And on the chieftain's brow a crimson gash.

— — — I *saw* a confused running
Of men together, and blood on the feet.
"Ye that are the men of Geraint, make haste." [1]

There is certainly an air of reality in this description. It does not consist of general phrases which are the common appendages of poetical battles. The images selected seem taken from the tumultuous circumstances of a conflict, which the bard had actually witnessed.

The personages mentioned in this battle decide its chronology. The bard styles Geraint the son of Erbin, and he mentions Arthur as the commander of the Britons:

At Llongborth were slain to Arthur
Valiant men, who hewed with steel.
He was the emperor and director of the toil. [2]

Thus the chief features of this elegy attest its genuineness.

In his elegy on Urien Reged, we meet with the same personal assertions, which it is natural for genuine poems to contain:

I bear a head at my side; the head of Urien;
The mild leader of his army —
Upon his white bosom is the sable raven. [3]

In his elegy on Cynddylan we meet with an idea which it is unlikely that any but the real author of the poem should have conceived. Cynddylan had fallen against the victorious Saxons, and the first image which occurs to his friend and bard is, that

[1] Yn Llongborth gwelais drydar
Ac elorawr yn ngwyar
A gwyr rhudd rhag rhuthr esgar.

Yn Llongborth gwelais i arvau
Gwyr a gwyar yn dineu.

- - - - Gwelais gymminad
Gwyr yn ngryd a gwaed ar iad
Rhag Geraint mawr mab ei dad.

Yn Llongborth gwelais drabludd
Ar fain brain ar goludd
Ac ar gran cynran manrudd.

- - - - Gwelais i breithred
Gwyr ynghyd a gwaed ar draed
A vo gwyr i Eraint brysied. *Arch.* p. 101.

[2] Yn Llongborth llas i Arthur
Gwyr dewr cymmynynt a dur
Ammherawdyr llywiawdyr llavur. *Ibid.* p. 102.

[3] Pen a borthav ar vy nhu; Pen Urien
Llary, llyw ei llu
Ac ar ei vron wen fran ddu. *Ibid.* p. 103.

his domains and palace are on fire. He sees the flames arising—he anticipates the calamities which the victorious foe will pour upon the country—he calls upon the maidens of Wales to behold the ravage, and to recollect the misery which will attend the married state from the loss of husbands, children, and property:

Stand out, ye virgins, and behold the territory of Cynddylan,
The palace of Pengwern! Is it not in flames?
Woe to the youthful who wish for social ties. [1]

This is followed by another trait that seems to have been borrowed from real nature. It is that the bard recollects a tree—a favourite object—and expresses his hope that it will escape in the devastation:

One tree, around which the twining woodbine clasps,
Perhaps will escape—
But what God wills, be it done! [2]

In the Gododin of Aneurin, there are also expressions which indicate that the events passed in his sight. There seems much of the particularity of genuineness in these lines:

I beheld the scene from the highland of Odren:
A sacrifice round the omen-fire which they brought down.
I saw it as usual on the town of Fledegein,
And the men of Nwython toiled to excess.
I saw men in complete order, by the dawn, from Addoen,
And the head of Dyfnwal, ravens were consuming. [3]

Taliesin also avows his personal acquaintance with the events he narrates:

Conspicuously before the sons of Llyr at the outlets of Henvelen;
*I saw* the oppression of the tumult, and wrath and tribulation:
The weapons glittered on the splendid helmets
Conspicuously before the Lord of Fame in the dales of the Severn,
Before Brochwel of Powys, who loved my muse.

*Arch.* p. 66.

[1] Sevwç allan vorwynion, a syllwç werydre Cynddylan
Llys Pengwern neud tandde
Gwac ieuainc a eiddynt brodre. *Arch.* p. 107.

[2] Un pren a gwyddvid arno,
O dianc ys odid
A vyno Duw dervid. *Ibid.* p. 107.

[3] Gweleis y dull o ben tir Odren
Aberth am goelcerth a disgynnyn
Gweleis oedd cynnevin ar dref Ffledegein
A gwyr Nwythion rygodesyn
Gweleis gwyr dullyawr gan aur addevyn
A phen Dyfnwal a breich brein ae cnoyn. Aneurin, p. 18.

Ceint rac meibion Llyr yn ebyr Henfelen
Gweleis treis trydar ac asar ac anghen
Yd lethrynt lasnawr ar bennawr disgywen
Ceint rhag udd clodeu yn noleu Hasren
Rhag Brochwel Powys a garwys fy Awen.

TALIESIN, p. 66.

4. Many passages may be noticed in these poems which seem to have been taken from objects and incidents then really existing, and which could hardly have occurred to the mind of a fraudulent impostor, especially in those rude ages, when the artful precautions of literary deceit were very little understood.

Urien had a sister named Eurddyl. It was natural that on Urien's assassination, Llywarch, his friend, should think of the grief which the catastrophe would occasion to his sister, and that the bard should mention the circumstance in his elegy on Urien; accordingly he twice alludes to her feelings:

Eurddyl will be disconsolate to-night,
In Aber Lleu Urien was slain.[1]

It seems to me to be likewise a genuine, but not an obvious circumstance, that in the night after the battle, in which his patron Cynddylan fell, the bard should feel himself interrupted by the screams of the birds of prey over their dismal repast. Their cries recall to his recollection his friend, whose remains were at their mercy:

Eagle of Eli, thou dost scream loudly to-night;
In the blood of men thou dost eagerly swim —
He is in the wood — heavy is my grief.[2]

Llywarch speaks of an event as having happened on the preceding night. This is a phrase which would hardly have been used in a surreptitious poem:

Gwen, by the Llawen, watched
*Last night,* with the shield uplifted —
As he was my son, he did not retreat.[3]

Is not the following passage the description of a man who had beheld the object he mentions?

When Pyll was slain, *gashing was the wound,*
*And the blood on the hair seemed horrible.*[4]

[1] Handid Eurddyl avlawen henoeth,—
Yn aber Lleu lladd Urien. LL. HEN, *Arch.* p. 105.

[2] Eryr Eli, gorelwi heno,
Yn ngwaed gwyr gwynnovi;
Ev yn nghoed, trwm hoed i mi. *Ib.* p. 109.

[3] Gwen wrth Lawen ydd wyliis
Neithwyr, a'r ysgwyd ar ygnis;
Can bu mab i mi ni ddiengis. *Ib.* p. 116.

[4] Pan las Pyll oedd tywyll briw
A gwaed ar wallt hyll. *Ib.* p. 117.

There is much natural representation in the passage of his elegy on Urien, of the confused state of his army after their leader's fall:

> On Friday I saw great anxiety
> Among the baptized embattled hosts,
> Like a swarm without a hive.[1]

The account of the pursuit made after Urien's murderer is also very natural:

> There is commotion in every region,
> In search of Llofan with the detested hand.[2]

The real Llywarch, seated in the mansion of Urien, when he wrote his elegy, might allude to it as before him, in the manner he does in the following verses, but the images would hardly have occurred to an impostor:

> Many a hunting dog and towering hawk
> Have been trained on this floor,
> Before Erlleon became polluted.
>
> This hearth—ah! will it not be covered with nettles!
> Whilst its defender lived
> It was accustomed to petitioners.
>
> This hearth, will it not be turned up by swine!
> It has been more accustomed to the clamour of men
> And the circling horns of the banquet.[3]

The topics of a forger are more general than these, and more remote from individual reality.

The images of a light fall of snow—of the warriors advancing over it to the combat; but of Llywarch staying at home, from age, have the semblance of reality in these lines:

> Scarcely has the snow covered the vale—
> The warriors are hast'ning to battle.
> I shall not go: infirmity will not let me.[4]

[1] Dyw Gwener gwelais i ddiwyd mawr
Ar vyddinawr bedydd
Haid heb vodrydav hy bydd. Ll. Hen, *Arch.* p. 105.

[2] Cyrchyniad yn mhob bro
Yn wysc Llovan Llawddifro. *Ib.* p. 106.

[3] Llawer ci geilic a hebawc wryenic
A lithiwyd ar y llawe
Cyn bu Erlleon llawedrawr.
Yr aelwyd hon neus cudd dynad
Tra vu vyw ei gwarcheidwad
Mwy gorddyvnasai eirchiad.
Yr aelwydd hon neus cladd hwch
Mwy gorddyvnasai elwch gwyr
Ac am gyrn cyveddwch. *Ib.*

[4] Otid eiry toid ystrad
Dyvrysiant cedwyr i gad
Mi nid av anav ni'm gad. *Ib.* p. 119.

In the poems of Taliesin, there are some passages which seem taken from the life. I would refer to the Mead Song already quoted, on this subject, and will also adduce another passage on his son:

> Avagddu, my son, also,
> The blessed Lord caused him to be formed.
> In the mutual contention of songs,
> His wit was superior to mine.[1]

This seems a very natural turn of thought for a parent proud of his son.

The apostrophe of Aneurin to the son of Clydno, may be also mentioned:

> He would slay the ravagers with the swiftest blade:
> Like rushes would they fall before his arm.
> Son of Clydno! of extended fame: I will sing to thee
> With praise without bound, without end.[2]

When the same poet, after celebrating the valour of a hero, calls by name on some persons who were present at the battle as witnesses to the truth of his panegyric, it seems to me not to be an artificial thought:

> When Caradoc hastened to the conflict,
> Like the boar of the wood fiercely he would tear.
> The bull of battle — he fell'd them down in the struggle.
> He would allure the wild dogs with his hand.
> *My witness* is Owen the son of Eulad,
> And Gwrien, and Gwyn, and Gwriat.[3]

The following account of the escape of the bard from this destructive battle, may be also noticed as an artless indication of

[1] Afagddu fy mab innue
Dedwydd Dofydd rhwy goreu
Ynghysamryson cerddeu
Oedd gwell ei synwyr no'r fau'. TALIESIN, 68.

The bards frequently contended with each other for pre-eminence, and their patrons adjudged prizes to the superior genius. An instance of these contentions in the twelfth century, was the competition of Cyndelw with Seisyll, for the chair of Madoc, prince of Powys. The poem in the Welsh Archaiology, p. 210., is upon this struggle. In the fifteenth century these contentions were very frequent. In the above passage, Taliesin alludes to those of his times.

[2] Ef laddei oswydd a llafn llymmaf
Mal brwyn yt gwyddynt rac y adaf
Mab Clytno clothir canaf y ty
Or clot heb or heb eithaf. ANEUR. p. 9.

[3] Pan gryssyei Garadawc y gat
Mal baedd coet trychwn trychiat
Tarw beddin yn trin gomynyat
Ef lithyei wyd gwn oe anghat
Ys vy nhyst Ewein vab Eulat
A Gwrien a Gwyn a Gwriat. *Ib.*

the author of the poem being a contemporary and witness of the scene he narrates:

Men went to Cattraeth: they were notorious.
Wine and mead, from gold, were their liquors:
Three heroes, and three hundred and sixty wearing the golden torques.
They were of those who hastened after excess of liquor.
There escaped only three from the power of their swords.
Two war dogs from Aeron and Cynon,
And I—from my blood-spilling by the value of my blessed muse.[1]

From the passage which I shall next cite, it would seem that Cenau, the son of Llywarch Hên, had once released Aneurin from a prison. In mentioning this warrior, it was very natural that the bard's gratitude should remember and record the incident to which he had been so much indebted; but I do not think that the thought would have occurred to a fraudulent impostor, as the author of the Gododin must have been, if he was not an Aneurin:

From the power of the sword, illustrious to protect—
From the fierce prison of earth he brought me;
From the place of death; from an unlovely land,
Cenau, the son of Llywarch, energetic and bold.[2]

The expressions which Aneurin, before this, used concerning the misfortune to which he here alludes, have an appearance of reality unsuitable to imposture:

I am not turbulent, or self-willed;
I will not revenge my destiny—
In the earthy house,
With the iron chain
About the top of my two knees,
From the mead, from the festive horns,
From the host at Cattraeth.[3]

[1] Gwyr a aeth Gattraeth buant en wawc
Gwin a med o eur vu eu gwirawd
Blwyddyn yn erbyn wrdyn deawd
Triwyr a thri ugeint a thrichant eurdorchaud
Or saul yt grysiasant uch gormant wiraut
Ny diengei namyn tri o wrhydri ffossawt
Deu gatci Aeron a Chenon dayar awt
A minneu om guaetfreu gwerth vy guennaut. ANEUR. p. 4.

[2] Onerth y cleddyf claer vy hamuc
O garchar anwar daear ym duc
O gyvle angheu o anghar dut
Ceneu vab Llywarch dihafarch drut. *Ib.* p. 8.

[3] Nyt wyf vynawc blin
Ni ddialav vy ordin
Yn y ty deyerin
Catuyn heyernin

It would seem, from this passage, that the bard had been taken prisoner at this unfortunate battle.

It would be intruding too long on the patience of the reader, to discuss this subject in its full extent. I will therefore only notice,

5thly, Those allusions which relate to the personal feelings of these bards. Fictitious poems seldom touch on this topic, because it is not easy to counterfeit true feeling. I can still less suspect any one before the twelfth century to have thought of counterfeiting it.

In the poems of Taliesin upon Urien, there is a perpetual expression of gratitude, which is far more likely to be found in a composition addressed to a living patron, whom such sentiments would gratify, than to have been used in forged poetry.

Several of Taliesin's panegyrical odes close with these earnest phrases of attachment. I will cite three:

I also, Taliesin—
May I be blind in age,
Or in the anguish of death,
If I praise not Urien.[1]

In the future severe death of necessity,
May I not be in smiles,
If I praise not Urien.[2]

I am not increasing,
But into age I am departing:
Yet in the severe death of necessity,
May I not be in smiles,
If I praise not Urien.[3]

Other expressions of gratitude may be noticed:

There is superior happiness
For the illustrious in fame; for the liberal of praise;
There is superior glory,

---

Am benn vy deulin
O ved o vuelin
O Gattraeth wnin. ANEUR. p. 7.

[1] A minneu Dalyesin—
Ny dallywyf yn hen
Ym dygyn aghen
Oni moluyf Uryen. TALIES. p. 51.

[2] Ym dygn angeu angen
Ni byddif im dirwen
Na molwyf Urien. *Ib.* p. 55.

[3] —— Nad wyf cynnydd
Ac yn y fallwyf hen
Ym dygn angeu angen
Ni biddif ym dyrwen
No molwyf Urien. *Ib.*

That Urien and his children exist,
He reigns the supreme, the sovereign Lord.[1]

Urien of Reged, the most generous that is, and will be;
And that has been since Adam; Urien, of the amplest sword.[2]

Another paragraph on Urien is:

I am an old wanderer—
I am of cheerful talents—
Silence would be envy.
Be mine the praise of Urien.[3]

All these expressions are favourable to the argument of the genuineness of the poetry.

Many personal feelings occur in Llywarch's poetry, which attest their own genuineness. I will cite only a few.

In his elegy on his patron Cynddylan, who fell in battle, he says:

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night;
Without fire; without a family —
My overflowing tears gush out.

The hall of Cynddylan pierces me to see it
Without a covering; without a fire:
My general is dead, and I myself alive.[4]

The self-reproach of the last line is striking! Very natural is the following reflection:

Brethren I have had, who were free from evil,
Who grew up like the saplings of the hazel —
One by one they are all departed![5]

[1] Ys mwy llawenydd
Gan glodfan clodrydd
Ys mwy gogoniant
Fod Urien ai blant
Ac ef yn Arbennig
Yn oruchel wledig. — Talies. p. 55.

[2] Uryen o Reget hael ef syd
Ac a vyd
Ac a vu yr Adaf letaf y gled. — *Ib.* p. 51.

[3] Wyf carddenhin hen
Wyf cyfreu lawen
Athaw y dygen
Meu molawd Urien. — *Ib.* p. 40.

[4] Ystavell Cynddylan ys tywyll heno
Heb dan heb deulu
Hidyl mau yd gynu
Ystavell Cynddylan a'm gwan ei gweled
Heb doed, heb dan
Marw vy nglyw byw my hunan. — Ll. Hen. p. 114.

[5] Brodyr ambwyad ni vall
A dyvynt val gwyail coll
O un i un edynt oll. — *Ib.* p. 112.

In his elegy on his old age, and on the loss of his children, he has many very interesting passages:

> Before I appeared on crutches, I was comely;
> My lance was the foremost of the spears;
> ———— I am heavy—I am wretched.[1]

> Old age is scoffing at me,
> From my hair to my teeth;
> And the eye which the young ones loved.[2]

I think there is much beauty in the following image of the helplessness of age:

> This leaf, is it not blown about by the wind?
> Woe to it for its fate!
> Alas, it is old.[3]

There is much nature in the following passages, if we conceive them to have been written by the real Llywarch, whose life extended to a long period:

> The four most hateful things to me through life,
> Have met together with one accord:
> Cough, age, sickness, and grief.
> I am aged — I am lonely. I am decrepit—cold—
> After having enjoyed the bed of honour.
> I am rash—I am outrageous.
> They who loved me once, now love me not.
> Maidens love me not. I am resorted to by none;
> I cannot move myself along—
> Ah, death! wilt thou not befriend me![4]

There is much of a genuine appearance in Aneurin's expression of his feelings in this passage:

[1] Cyn bum cain vaglawg bum eirian
Oedd cynwayw vy mhar
——wyv trwm wyv truan. Ll. Hen, p. 112.

[2] Yn cymmwedd y mae henaint a mi
O'm gwallt i'm daint
A'r cloyn a gerynt yr ieuaint. *Ib.* p. 115.

[3] Y ddeilen hon neus cynnired gwynt
Gwae hi o'i thynged
Hi hen. *Ib.*

[4] Vy mhedwar priv-gas erymoed
Ymgyvarvyddynt yn unoed
Pas a henaint haint a hoed.

Wyv hen wyv unig wyv anelwig, oer,
Gwedy gwely ceinmyg.

Wyv ehud wyv anwar
Y sawl a'm caroedd ni'm car
Ni'm car rhianedd nim cynnired neb
Ni allav ddarymred
Wi o angau na'm dygred. *Ib.*

Miserable am I after the fatigue of the conflict,
To suffer the pangs of death in sensibility!
Twice heavily afflicted am I, to have seen
The falling of our men in all directions,
And to have felt the anxious sigh and grief
For the valiant men of the social land;
For Rhuvaun, for Gwgawn, Gwiawn, and Gwylyget![1]

In Merdhin's Avallenau, there is also much display of natural feelings appropriate to his character. The allusion to his insanity is interesting:

I myself am a wild horrible screamer;
I am pierced with horrors — I am covered by no raiment![2]

The following passages very forcibly display his situation and feelings:

Gwendydd does not love me — she never greets me.
I am hated by the minister of the favours of Rhydderch.
I have ruined his son and his daughter.
Death relieves all — why does it not visit me?[3]

Since Gwenddolau, no prince honours me,
No pleasure allures me, no fair one cheers me;
Yet in the battle of Arderydd I wore the golden torques,
Before I was disastrous to her who has the appearance of the swan.[4]

I heard the rumour in the first dawn of the day,
That the minister of the favours of Meuwyd,
Twice, thrice, and four times in one day ——
Oh, Jesus! why did not my destruction come,
Before it happened to my hand to destroy the son of Gwendydd?[5]

[1] Truan yw gennyf gwedy lluddet
Goddef gloes angheu trwy agcyffret
Ac eil trwm truan gennyf vy gwelet
Gogwddai an gwyr ny pen o draet
Ac ucheneit hir ac eilyuet
Yn ol gwyr pybyr temyr tutuet
Rhuvawn a Gwgawn Gwiawn a Gwylyget. ANEUR. p. 12.

[2] A minnau wyf gwyllt gorthryfiad
Im cathrudd cythrudd nim cudd dillad. MERDDIN, *Afall.* p. 151.

[3] Mi nim car Gwenddydd ac nim hennyrch
Wyf cas gan wasawg gwaesaf Ryddyrch
Ry rewiniais iei fab ef ai ferch
Angeu a ddwg pawb pa rag nam cyvairch. *Ib.* p. 152.

[4] A guedi Gwenddoleu neb rhiau nim peirch
Nim gogawn gwarwy nim gofwy gordderch
Ac yngwaith Arderydd oed aur fy ngorthorch
Cyn i bwy aelaw heddiw gan eiliw eleirch. *Ib.*

[5] Chwedleu a gigleu yn nechreuddydd
Rysorri gwassawg gwaesaf Meuwydd
Dwywaith a theirgwaith pedeirgwaith yn undydd
Och Iesu! na ddyfu fy nihenydd
Cyn dyfod ar fy llaw llaith mab Gwendydd. *Ib.*

After predicting that Arthur shall re-appear, and Gwenhwyvar be punished, he exclaims,

> Worse has befallen me, without hope of deliverance.
> The son of Gwendydd is slain — my hand did it.[1]

I will close this head of my subject by remarking what appears to me to be a striking instance of identity of composition in the works of Llywarch Hên. Most authors have a style, a manner peculiar to themselves. The poems of Llywarch Hên display such a peculiarity, and as all of them contain it, I will adduce it as a proof that they all spring from one author, which is a circumstance of no small consideration in the question of their genuineness.

It is a favourite habit with Llywarch Hên, when an idea has occurred to him which he feels to be interesting, to dwell upon the idea for a considerable time, and to recur to it several times before he leaves it. Thus, in his poem on his age, his attention having been excited by the staff which supported him, he begins seven stanzas successively with an address to it, calling it "Baglan bren," "my wooden crook." P. 114.

In the poem on his children, which is connected in the MSS. with that on his age, (but in my opinion very improperly, as they are clearly two distinct poems[2],) the idea of his son Gwen occurs to him. He immediately pursues it for six stanzas, beginning each with his son's name. P. 116.

In his elegy on Cynddylan, he begins fourteen stanzas with his friend's name. The recollection of Cynddylan's hall, and its deserted appearance, in consequence of the prince's fall, afterwards comes into his mind, and he begins several stanzas with allusions to it, as he afterwards alludes to the Eagle of Eli, and the churches of Bassa. P. 108, 109.

In his elegy on Urien, the same practice is observable. He describes himself as having the head of Urien at his side, and he repeats the image for thirteen stanzas.

His elegy on Geraint contains twenty-four stanzas, all commencing with one of three phrases. "Rhag Geraint gelyn" introduces three stanzas. "Yn Llongborth gwelais" begins twelve stanzas, and the first line of the next stanza is common to all that follow.

I do not adduce this peculiarity as a poetical beauty. It is certainly not the offspring of taste, or imagination, but is a trait which identifies all these poems to be the works of one author; and this author, from the poems themselves, appears to have been Llywarch Hên. I think I can account for this peculiarity by

[1] Gwaeth i mi a dderfydd heb ysgorfa.
Lleas mab Gwendydd — fy llaw ai gwna. MERDDIN, *Afall.* 152.

[2] The poem on his old age contains (I think) only the first twenty stanzas. I think it then ceases, and that what follows is a distinct and separate poem on the loss of his children, which should be printed separately.

saying that alliteration was the rage of the Welsh bards, as I shall presently show, and that in this peculiarity Llywarch was striving to show how many varieties of thoughts he could put together under the same idea, and connect with the same words. To begin several stanzas with saying "the hall of Cynddylan," is the same idle play of mind, as to begin several words with the same letters. How much of these practices sprang from the Druidical contrivances to assist their memory while they taught their youths so many verses[1], without committing them to writing, cannot now be determined.

Aneurin and Merdhin have this habit so much, as to show it to be a characteristic of the poetry of that day. But Llywarch's poems have it to an unexampled excess, which stamps them all with the same mark.

## V. On the Language of the Bards.

On the language of these bards, it is very favourable to the genuineness of their poems, that though they were written in Welsh, they have not been found intelligible by many modern Welshmen. Evans, who has published an essay on the Welsh poetry, mentions this several times. He says of the Gododin, "by reason of its great antiquity, it is not easily understood," p. 17. Again "many of Taliesin's poems, on account of their great antiquity, are very obscure, as the works of his contemporaries are," p. 18. In speaking of the poem of another bard of these times, he again complains of the obscurity and difficulty of these venerable remains, p. 49. He says of the best antiquaries and critics in the Welsh language living in his time, that "they all confess that they do not understand above one-half of any of Taliesin's poems," p. 54.

The difficulty of understanding these poems, which Evans so strongly states, and which so many Welshmen have felt and lamented, is just what would be found in genuine poems of the sixth century. I adduce it as an attestation of their genuineness. It is not, indeed, an insuperable difficulty, because the means to overcome it are open to every one. The writings of one age are the best guides to our understanding those of a preceding. They who are conversant with the poems of the fourteenth century, will understand those of the twelfth, and all who have carefully exercised themselves in the compositions of the twelfth century, will, by patient labour, comprehend and read those of the sixth. Dr. Owen Pughe, whose leisure has been devoted to the ancient literature of his country, has facilitated its study to every one by his new dictionary of its language, in which the diction of the old bards is particularly attended to, and illustrated. The circumstance of the difficulty of the language to modern Welshmen, is surely an important feature of genuineness. On this topic, however, it would be inde-

[1] Cæsar says of the Druids, "magnum ibi numerum versuum ediscere dicuntur." —L. vi. c. 13.

corous in me not to speak very diffidently. Welshmen are the only competent judges on this curious point.

It is certainly indispensable to the genuineness of these poems,

VI. That their historical allusions should be true.

As far as I have examined these poems, their historical allusions seem to me to be singularly true. I say singularly, because they present none of the fables which we meet with in Jeffrey.

I consider it as a very remarkable circumstance, that the Welsh bards, and the most valuable of the triads, express or imply a train of history very unlike, and sometimes very contradictory to, that of Jeffrey. Such is the difference, that if Jeffrey's facts on many occasions be true, the Welsh bards must be forgeries. If, however, the world be right in its opinion, that Jeffrey is the fabler, then the dissimilarity between him and the bards is a striking circumstance in favour of the poems.

I have already observed, that they completely negative the wonderful history of Arthur. In abiding this test, they stand a very severe and perilous one, from which, if they had been fabricated, they could not have escaped.

They present another trying test of their genuineness in their general subjects. If they had been only on love adventures, or love complaints, descriptions of nature, or mere effusions of sentiment, they could not have been examined on these grounds, because such topics may belong to one age as well as to another. But historical poems on men, and incidents contemporary with the bards, are such as forgery can never well execute, from the individual minutiæ they require, and by which they can be detected the more easily. Will any one impeach them on this side, which, if they were factitious compositions, would be their weakest?

It would be a task too long for this essay to show the justice of all the allusions point by point. I will only add some general observations, and wait for the attack before I make the defence.

1. As far as authentic history goes, it proves that there were such persons as these to whom many of these poems are addressed, or who are mentioned in them. I mean Urien, Geraint, Cadwallon, Cynddylan, Cian Gwyngwn, Rhydderch, Gwendolau, Gwen, Cunedda, Aeddan, and others.
2. The British states in the north of the island, which they particularize, or imply, present a curious train of real historical facts.
3. The numerous little independent kingdoms in other parts of the island, which they also imply, and the civil discords to which they allude, were historical facts.
4. Llywarch's elegy on Urien turns chiefly on his murder. That he was assassinated can be proved from other authorities.

An historical objection has been raised against the Welsh bards, to which a mistake gave rise. The objection is, that the Welsh bards call the English, Allmyn.

The objection is this. The term Allmyn obviously corresponds with the Latin Allemanni, but "at the supposed period of the bards, the terms Allemanni, and Allemannia, were almost restricted to modern Switzerland." The statement is, that the word passed in late times from the French language into the Armorican, and thence into the Welsh. The inference is, that poems using this word must have been written much posterior to the sixth century, because the term Allemannia was not applied to all Germany till a much more recent period.

The answer is, that the objection does not apply to the four bards I have mentioned, because *none* of them use the term *Allmyn*. It is Golyddan, not Taliesin, who uses the word Allmyn.

Neither Aneurin, Taliesin, Llywarch Hên, nor Merdhin, has the word Allmyn. Aneurin, in speaking of the invaders, calls them Saeson. Taliesin had also Saeson, and sometimes Eingl. Sometimes he uses the descriptive name of Alltudion, or foreigners. He once has the word Germania, and once Saxonia. Llywarch has Sais, Saeson, and once Franc. Merdhin has Saeson and Frain in his Avallenau, the only one of his poems that I think free from interpolation.

Hence the objection does not impeach the genuineness of these four bards, as it does not concern them.

I am not, therefore, under a necessity of saying any more on this subject. But as, if it be applicable, it will tend to discredit the poem of Golyddan, of which I think favourably, I will make a few remarks on the subject.

To suppose that the Welsh bard used the term Allmyn as the term Allemanni, that is, as the general designation of the German people, or with the full sense of the word in the eighteenth century, is to create a difficulty on purpose to make it an objection. The word, as used by the bard, has no such meaning; and if it has not, the objection is nothing.

The bard, in speaking of the invaders, sometimes calls them Allmyn. This is the simple fact. The only question upon it is, what or whom does he mean by the term? I will presume that the Latin word Allemanni was in his mind when he used it. But who were the Allemanni, not in the thirteenth century, but in the sixth? They were not restricted to modern Switzerland.

The Allemanni made themselves celebrated by many wars against the Romans and their allies. In 360, and 365, their invasions of Gaul were dreadful, and must have diffused their name in terror through Britain, and every country adjacent.

In 496, they assailed the Francs and Clovis. "From the source of the Rhine to its conflux with the Mein and the Moselle, the formidable swarms of the Allemanni commanded either side of the river. They had spread themselves into Gaul, over the modern provinces of Alsace and Lorraine." Gib. iii. 563.

From this formidable position they invaded the kingdom of Cologne, and the battle of Tolbiac ensued, in which they contended with the Francs for the alternative of empire or servitude. After

a long and varying conflict, the Allemanni were totally and irrecoverably defeated. Some fled to other countries, as they who were placed in Rhætia[1], and with the Ripuarii, and the rest were subjected to the Francs.[2]

The name of the Allemanni had then become the designation of a large part of the German nations by the end of the fifth century. Whether on their conquest by Clovis, any sailed down the Rhine to Britain, as a part travelled to Rhætia, is not stated, but it is probable; and an indignant British bard might use their name to stigmatize the invaders of his country, because in representing them as Allemanni, as those celebrated warriors whom the Francs had at the epoch of the Saxon invasions defeated and dispersed, he strongly exposed them to the contempt of the Britons. Nothing was better fitted to rouse their valour than to have it believed that the invaders were fugitives themselves. Conflicting parties frequently give each other abusive names, which become at last almost historical terms; witness the Cavaliers and Roundheads.

That it was really used as a term of opprobrium, appears to me more probable from the meaning which the Welsh language afforded for the expression. Allmyn signifies foreigners, as well as Allemanni. The most usual name for foreigners, in Welsh, was alltudion, from *all*, another, and *tud*, a country; but the word Allmyn has the same import, for *men*, and *man*, is the Welsh for place. Therefore just as all-tud meant another country; so, all-man, another place, was nearly its synonyme.

In the same spirit Milton applied the word Gallus to Salmasius, because it admitted of other allusions besides its obvious meaning.

I think the passages of Golyddan, in which Allmyn is connected with alltudedd prove the pun which he intended to make opprobrious.

Ef gyrhaut allmyn i alltudedd. 156.

"He would have driven the foreigners to a foreign place."

So,

Allmyn ar gyrchwyn i alltudydd. 159.

"The foreigners removing to a foreign place."

The word Allmyn being understood to denote foreigners as well as Allemanni, it was used as a contemptuous paronomasia by an indi-

[1] Marc. ii. 16.

[2] Goldastus, in his preface, remarks that the Frankish writers, from the perpetual wars of their countrymen with the Alemanni before these people were broken up, comprised all the nations who used the German dialects in that name. But Walafridus Strabo, who flourished in 840, gives us the boundaries of the 'vera et vetus Alemannia,' "Quæcunque regiones ab utroque Rheni latere alpibus includuntur ab ortu ejus usque ad Rauracos; comprehensis ad Acromii dextram, Alpigovia; et in Rheni defluxu continentibus terris, qua parte sese Brisgovia extendit ac finit. Ad sinistram vero, pleraque Helvetiâ et bona Burgundiæ parte."

vidual, to convey strong opprobrium, and also to give that alliteration to the line, of which the Welsh bards were so fond; and it does not contradict their historical designation.

VII. That the manners which they express are consistent.

In the poems of Ossian we certainly meet with an elegance of sentiment, a refined tenderness and delicacy of feeling wholly incompatible with the period to which Ossian is assigned. The Welsh bards may suffer with the cultured taste for the avowal; but certainly this objection cannot be urged against these poems. These bards were warriors, their songs commemorate warriors, and their feelings and sentiments are wholly martial. I believe there is not one tribute to love in the whole series of the ancient ones. Friendship and grief, and gratitude to patrons, occupy many stanzas; but Venus and Cupid have not received a single compliment. All this is very natural for the turbulent and disastrous period in which these poets lived. In more tranquil times, beauty obtained the most elegant wreaths of the Welsh laurel. Love has sighed in Welsh as profusely as in French, and much new imagery, and much originality of sentiment, abound in the bardic poets of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

As this essay is intended to be concise, I will only select three specimens of the reality of the costume of manners which these poems exhibit. Aneurin, in describing Caeog, a British hero, mentions,

Gwefrawr godrwyawr torchawr am ran.

"With wreaths of amber twined round his temples."

This singular fact of the ancient Britons wearing amber-beads, is confirmed by many beads of amber having been found in the barrows on Salisbury plain, which have been recently dug. I understand that in several of these graves, pieces of amber, like beads, have been met with; and in one, as many beads were found as would have made a wreath. These are in the possession of Mr. Cunnington, of Heytesbury, who has explored many tumuli during last summer, and whose curious museum of British antiquities, as arrow-heads, urns, &c. found in these barrows, is highly worthy the notice of the antiquary.[1]

[1] In one barrow were found beads of amber and jet of various sizes, but corresponding with two horn rings, to which the strings that tied them were probably appended. Wreaths of this sort are also described in Douglass's Nenia Britannica. Sometime since, an ancient *Lorica* was discovered at Mold, in *Flintshire*, in a mound in a field known by the name of Cae Ellillon, or the goblin field. The account in the Merthyr Chronicle states, that in removing the mound, the workmen came upon a skeleton. The skull was of gigantic proportion, and the thigh bones those of a man of great stature. *Lying* on the *chest* was found the corslet, *studded over with two or three hundred amber beads*, and crossed with a kind of filagree work of fine gold, giving somewhat the appearance of the angles found on the old Saxon arch; the whole based on pure gold. The beads are said to preserve their freshness and transparency. On this statement Dr. Owen Pughe observes, that

Another part of the British costume which they notice is the wearing the golden torques. Llywarch mentions it, p. 135:

Four and twenty sons I have had
Wearing the golden wreath, leaders of armies.

Aneurin mentions it several times:

Of all who went to Cattraeth, wearing the golden torc, or wreath,
On the business of Mynydauc, courteous to his people,
There went not, among the Britons
Of Gododin, a man of war superior to Cynon.

He states, that in the battle of Cattraeth there were

Three hundred and sixty-three who had the golden torques.

In attestation of the reality of this ornament, I cannot do better than cite from Gibson's Camden the following passage upon it:

"In 1692, an ancient golden torques was dug up near the Castle of Harlech, in Merionethshire. It is a wreathed bar of gold, or perhaps three or four rods jointly twisted, about four feet long, flexile, but naturally bending only one way, in the form of a hat-band. It is hooked at both ends. It is of a round form, about an inch in circumference, and weighs eight ounces." Gibson's Additions to Camden, p. 658., edit. 1695.

I consider the use of mead, which is mentioned in several of the poems as the drink of their feasts, and of horns as the drinking vessels, as circumstances of consistent manners; so are the allusions to transmigration, which abound in Taliesin, and many appropriate traits in Aneurin and Llywarch. But on this point I ask the adversaries of the poems to make out objections.

VIII. That the form and composition of the poems suit their period.

If they exhibited a complex, or even a regular epic fable, or any mode of arrangement that critical rules would approve; if they were dressed in an elegant costume, or betrayed any skilful polish of manners or sentiment, we might have some room for suspicion. But they have nothing of this sort; they are as inartificial, as humble in design, and as rude in execution, as scepticism could desire. They show us the real wilderness of nature, with all the discordant mixture of occasional fecundity and intervening aridity. Pleasing passages, and very dull ones; bursts of

this person must have lived since the Romans left the island, or it is likely the body would have been burnt; and if he had lived about the year 600 or after, he would have been deposited in one of the churches: hence we may attribute his existence to about 500. Dr. Owen Pughe infers that he was Benlli Gawr or Benlli the Giant, who had his friends about him at his Din, on the summit called after him, Moel Benlli, and in sight of his residence called Wydd-greig, *now* called Mold, as well as in view of Dyffyn Clwyd on the other side. The grave of his son Beli is about eight miles off, for the Englynion Milwar (Warrior's Triplets) say that *Belli* lies at Llanarmon yr Iâl. — *Athenæum*, 27th Jan. 1838, p. 72.

light, and the most chilling gloom perpetually succeed each other, without any careful disposition, or judicious contrast. They display no order but that of the natural association of such ideas as they express. If they sing of battles, the heroes are praised without art, and the conflicts are described without method. Not a trace of the fine models of Greece or Rome, not a single imitation of their imagery or their poetical architecture can be discerned. They are just such compositions as such bards, in such an age, would be expected to write. Many traits of glowing poetry abound. Much of the inspired bard will be seen, but no contrivance, no taste, no delicacy, no art, no polish. The Gododin of Aneurin, the longest of the poems, is a very distinguished monument of antiquity, and its internal evidence is peculiar and strong. It is not of easy construction, because its text is much injured; and because it contains much lyrical measure, intermixed with the full heroic rime, and with the singular ornaments of Welsh poetry, of which I shall hereafter speak. The expressions are oftentimes very concise, its transitions very rapid and frequent, its diction strong and figurative; and sometimes made more difficult by the peculiar compound words in which the poet indulges, and which the Welsh language with great facility admits. Though an heroic poem of 920 lines with one subject, it exhibits a strong character of genuine unpolished irregularity. It hath no elegant or artful introduction or invocation; the bard was a warrior, and had fought in the conflict he describes. He was commemorating friends and fellow-soldiers; he had to state what he saw; there is therefore no reflective and refined address. He bursts at once into his subject, and begins it with describing not his plan or purpose, but one of his heroes.

From its genuineness it has also no regular, well-disposed fable; no careful concatenation of events, no well-placed or skilfully contrasted incidents; the poem is like a real native forest, wild, impressive, and picturesque, but very devious and irregular. It is rather poetic memoranda of a disastrous conflict, penned by a friend, who had witnessed its events in all the confusion in which they had occurred, than a well conceived, and artfully-arranged series of individual conflicts, like the poems of Homer, which though genuine, as to the author, yet contain incidents which the poet's invention has arranged as it pleased.

The Gododin abounds with strong and frequent bursts of feeling highly natural to its alleged author, but which are not so likely to have been shown in a forged poem, where the author would have to support an artificial character. One topic of this sort which pervades the poem, is that incident which occasioned the loss of the battle; I mean the inebriety of the Britons: to this the bard is perpetually alluding. As he notices the friends who fell around, he cannot drive from his memory the chief cause of their calamity: this was extremely natural.

The poem suddenly opens with the presence of a mounted war rior, whom the bard contemplates and describes:

Gredyv was a youth
Vigorous in the tumult.
A swift, thick-maned steed,
Was under the thighs of the fair youth.
A shield light and broad
Hung on the slender fleet courser.
His sword was blue and shining;
Golden spurs and ermine adorned him.[1]

But the poet contemplates him only to sing his elegy; from the next lines we find Gredyv was one of the victims of the day.

It is not for me,
To envy thee.
I will do nobler to thee;
In poetry I will praise thee.
Alas! sooner will the bloody bier arive,
Than nuptial festivity. —
Sooner will the ravens have food,
Than the dear friend of Owen
Enjoy a family.
Perishing in his abode under the ravens
Is the courser, by the valley,
Where the son of Marco was slain.[2]

From this warrior, the bard turns immediately to commemorate another, who appears to have been a great favourite, as many stanzas are devoted to him:

Caeawg instantly the foremost wherever he came,
The portion of mead from the chief lady had held —
The point of his shield was pierced. When he heard
The shout, he gave no protection. He pressed on,
Nor did he retire from the battle when the blood flowed around.
Like rushes he cut down the men. He would not depart.

[1] Gredyf gwr oed gwas
Gwhyr am dias
Meirch mwth myngvras
Y dan mordhuyt mygr was
Ysguyt ysgafn llydan
Ar bedrein mein buan
Cledyvawr glas glan
Ethy aur a phan.

[2] Ny bi ef a vi
Cas y rhof a thi
Gwell gwnaf a thi
Ar wawt dy voli
Cynt i waet elawr
No gyt i neithiawr
Cynt y uwyd i vrein
Noc yr argynrein
Cu cyveillt Euein
Cwl y vot y dan vrein
March ym pa vro
Ladd un mab Marco.

The Gododin relates not on the ground of Mordai
Before the tents of Madoc when he returned,
The return of more than one in a hundred.
Caeawg the overwhelmer raised his spear;
He was like the attack of an eagle on the strand when allured.
His promise was a token; most beloved.
He nobly executed his purpose: he retreated not
From the army of Gododin. He lay hid—
Valiant to urge the conflict, he was exalted in it.
But neither his figure nor his shield preserved him,
He was not able to survive the excessive bruises
From the blows of the embattled host.
Caeawg the leader, with the countenance of a wolf,
With amber wreaths twined over his eye-brows.
Fatal was the amber, the ornament of the banquet.
Oh! that he had disdained the strife of the wallowing men;
When Gwyned came to the north to share
The council of the son of Ysgyran.
Caeawg the leader armed in the shout,
Though he is not now the hero ardent for deeds of blood,
To share in opening the front of the arrayed forces,
He overthrew five bands before his blade.
Of the men of Deira and Bernicia, the dreadful ones!
Twenty hundred of these perished in an hour!
Ah! sooner shall the wolf have flesh than thou a wedding;
Sooner shall the raven have prey than thou repose again.
Sooner shall the hurdle come with the mangled from the bloody earth.—
This was the dismal price of the mead in the pale disastrous hour.
And yet by the skilful he shall be extolled, while there exists a singer.[1]

[1] Caeawc cynhaiawc men y dehai
Diphun ymlaen bun medd a dalhei
Twll tal i rodawr yn y clywei
Aur ni roddei naud meint dilynei
Ny chyliei o gamhawn yn y verei
Waet mal brwyn gomynai gwyr nyt elhei
Nys adrawdd Gododin ar lawr mordei
Rac pebyll Madawc pan atcor ei
Namyn un o gant yn y delei

Caeawc Cynnyvint cyvlat erwyt
Ruthyr Eryr yn y lyr pan lithiwyt
Yamot a vu not a garwyt
Gwell a wnaeth y arvaeth ny giliwyt
Rac bedin Ododin o dechwyt
Hyder gymmell ar vreithell vanawyt
Ny nodi nac ysgeth nag ysgwyt
Ny ellir anet rhy vaethuwyt
Rac ergit cadfannau catwyt

Caeawc cynhorawc bleide maran
Gwefrawr godrwyawr torchawr am ran

The fate of these two heroes occasions him to advert to the cause. He proceeds to mention that the Britons had been feasting too plentifully before the battle :

The warriors went to Gododin full of laughter,
To bitter conflict with the clashing swords.—
Short interval of joy indeed !
The son of Botgad lamented it.—Manly was his arm.
But they went in a mass. Their punishment was complete
Both old and young. — The bold and the powerful —
The certain death of the conflict pierced them.
The warriors went to Gododin a laughing phalanx,
Soon the embattled host rose against them, in unlovely contest.
They flew with blades shining, without din,
The puissant column with spears alive, moved on.
They went to Cattraeth.—Loquacious were their hosts,
Pale mead had been their feast, and was their poison.
Three hundred with machines were in array.
But what a calm succeeded to their joy !
They went in a mass, their punishment was complete ;
The certain death of the conflict pierced them through.[1]

---

Bu guefraur guerthvaur guerth gwinvan
Ef gwrthodes gwrys gwyr discrein
Yt dyffei Wyned a gogledd ei rann
O gyssul mab ysgyran
Ysgwyd wr ancyfan

Caeawc cynhorawc arvawc yggawr
Cyn od iw y gwr gwrd eggwyawr
Cyvran yn racwan rac bydinawr
Cwydei pym pymunt rac y llafnawr
O wyr Dewyr a Bryneich dychrawr
Ugeincant eu divant yn unawr
Cynt y gig y vleid nog yt e neithiawr
Cynt e vud y vran noc yt y elawr
Cyn noe argyurein e waet e lawr
Gwerth med ynghcyntedh gan liwed awr
Kyneid hir ermygir tra vo cerdawr.

[1] Gwyr a aeth Ododin chwerthin ognaw
Chwerwyn trin a llain yn ymduliaw
Byrr vlyned yn hed udynt yndaw
Mab Botgat gunaeth guynyeth gunith e law
Cyt eiwynt y lanneu y benytyaw
A hen a ieueing a hydyr a allaw
Dadyl diheu angeu yn eu treiddiaw

Gwyr a aeth Ododin chwerthin wanar
Digynny ei emm bydin trin diachar
Wy ledi a llavnawr eb vawr drydar
Colovn glyw reithvyw rodi arwar

Gwyr a aeth Gattraeth oed ffraeth y lu
Glasved eu hancwyn ae gwenwyn vu
Trychant trwy beiriant yn cattau
A gwedy elwch tawelwch vu
Cyt elwynt y lanneu y benytu
Dadyl dieu angeu y eu treudu

These are the first seventy-three lines of the Gododin, and will serve as sufficient specimen of its style and character.

The name of Aneurin has stood very high in the estimation of his countrymen; but all human greatness is relative. The luminary of the sixth century, which shone with transcendent lustre in a rude country, where all around was dark and dreary, will appear but a cloudy orb, when it is presented to our notice in the noontide radiance of modern intellect. We must not approach the ancient Welsh bards as the competitors for the wreath of a Pindar or a Gray. These poets were the offspring of highly cultivated ages; while the ancient Welsh bards were but the descendants of rude ancestors, possessed indeed, for centuries, of the singular institution of Druidism or Bardism, but yet composing for a barbarous people, and confined to the narrow benefit of a local education.

Whoever reads these very ancient poems with attention, will be struck with a very great disparity between their versification and the intellect they display. The versification is formed on one of the most peculiar, difficult, and artificial systems conceivable, and it is executed as elaborately as it was designed.

To instance only from the Gododin. —

One of the practices by which its versification was governed, was rime. This is essential to the poetry. All the poems of the ancient bards are rimed at the end of the line; nor is the riming in couplets, which is comparatively easy, but the same rime is carried on for several lines. Thus in these final rimes in p. 1.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| dehai | erwyt | maran |
| dalhei | lithiwyt | am ran |
| clywei | garwyt | gwinvan |
| dilynei | giliwyt | discrein |
| verei | dechwyt | rann |
| elhei | vanawyt | ysgyran |
| mordei | ysgwyt | angcyfan |
| atcorei | vaethuwyt | |
| delei | catwyt | |

The same rime is sometimes carried on to great length. In p. 9., there are twenty-three lines together riming with *in:* and in p. 7., there are eighteen lines in *enn.*

But besides these final rimes, they also studied to introduce other riming syllables dividing the words of every line. Thus,

Cae*awc* cynhai*awc* men y dehai
Di*phun* ymlaen *bun* medd a dalhei

This practice was sometimes extended to three rimes in the line, as

Gwef*rawr* Godrwy*awr* torch*awr* am ran —
Blwydd*yn yn* erb*yn* ur*dyn* deawd —
Dadyl di*eu* ange*u* y *eu* treudu —

In all these examples the rimes are on final syllables.

In addition to these difficult peculiarities, was also the habit of alliteration, or of making two or more words in the line begin with the same letter. Thus in the first line,

Gredyf gwr oed gwas

In the third and fourth,

Meirch mwth myngvras
Y dan mordhuyt mygr was

Sometimes it was used profusely, as in this line,

Bu bwyt brein bu bud y yran

These alliterations are almost as incessant as their final rimes.

Nor were they content with confining their alliterations to the commencing letter, but they often extended them to syllables making a sort of alliterative rimes. Thus in two lines,

Bu *gue*fraur *gue*rthvawr *gue*rth gwinvan
Ef *gwr*thodes *gwr*ys *gwyr* discrein

Sometimes it happened, or was contrived, that the same line should exhibit the commencing alliterative rimes, and the final syllables rimes.

Mab Botgat *gua*n*eth gua*ny*eth gu*nith e law
Ny mynws *gwrawl gwydawl* chwegrwn

In selecting these difficulties of the ancient Welsh versification, I state those only which struck me as an Englishman. I believe there are many other niceties, perceptible and precious to Welsh bards and critics.

That such slavish attention to the incessant consonancy of syllables could never be exercised without a sacrifice of the most valuable qualities of poetic thought, must be felt by all to whom the lays of Parnassus are familiar. I was therefore not surprised to find the works of the Welsh bards beneath my expectations as poems. But I must pay the tribute due to the genius of Aneurin, to say, that notwithstanding the oppressive trammels in which he marched, and notwithstanding the gloom, disasters, and confusion of the period in which he lived, his Gododin has many passages which, for glowing expression, striking metaphor, genuine feeling, and poetic imagery, must please and interest in every age.

My opinion of the *poetry* of Taliesin's works is by no means consistent with his general fame. His power of versification, indeed, excites my surprise: it seems to have been as easy for him to rime in all sorts of measures, as for others to write prose; and he introduces frequently, even in his shortest measures, the peculiarities of bardic consonancy. Some of his poems are in what I would call the full heroic rime, like the mead song already quoted (p. 60.), others in short rimed metres of various lengths. But though he was certainly accomplished in all the arts of bardic versification, he is not very distinguished for genuine poetry of thought and imagery. Sometimes indeed the poet bursts out, as in the

following description of the gleam of the steel points of weapons, which is very original and picturesque:

I saw mighty men,
Who thronged together at the shout!
I saw blood on the ground,
From the assault of swords.
*They ting'd with blue the wings of the dawn,*
When they threw off the ashen spears.[1]

Several passages of this sort may be found; but he has not always much connection of subject, and very often much bardic mythology appears. This is in nothing more conspicuous than in his allusions to his own transmigrations. As this is a curious subject, I will detain the reader's attention for a short time upon it.

Among the Welsh remains is a MS. of poetical triads. The MS. has been entitled, Barddas; or, the Book of Bardism, or Cyvrinac Beirdd Ynys Prydain. The triads were collected together at different periods.[2] Some of them state the bardic doc-

[1] Gweleis wyr gorsawr
A Ddygyrchynt awr
Gweleis waed ar llawr
Rhag rhwthr cleddysawr
Glesynt esgwyll gwawr
Esgorynt yn waewawr. TALIES. p. 40.

[2] That the reader may have some idea of the book from which I am going to quote, I think it right to insert some extracts from its prefaces, with which Mr. Owen has favoured me.

The book was last transcribed and revised by Edward Davydd, who died 1690. His original MS. is yet extant, in the library of Llan Haran, in Glamorganshire, now the property of Mr. Turberville. The collection was made before him, by Llywelyn Sion, who flourished in 1580, and died in 1616. I will give a translation of a part of the Welsh preface of E. Davydd, and after that some extracts from the preface of the former collector, Llywelyn Sion; Mr. Owen has only added, in parentheses, the dates of the persons and things mentioned therein.

*E. Davydd's Advertisement.*

"Arranged by Edward Davydd, of Margam, in Morganwg, out of the books of bards and learned teachers, lest the materials should become lost; and more particularly the books of Meiryg Davydd, (1560. presd.) Davydd Llwyd Mathew, (1580. disc.) Davydd Benwyn, (1560. presd.) and Llywelyn Sion of Llangewys, (1560. disc. and presd. 1580.) who were bards graduated of the chair, according to the privilege and custom of the bards of the Isle of Britain; chiefs of science, under the authority of the county and sovereign of all the lordship of Morganwg, Gwent, and Euas.

"This arrangement was adjudged to be just, according to the primitive character of vocal song, and the usage of the primitive bards of the Isle of Britain; and was sanctioned in the congress of vocal song, held at Bewpyr Castle, in Morganwg, on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Whitsuntide, in the year 1681, under the protection of Sir Richard Basset, Knight, Lord of the place, and under the proclamation and notice of a year and a day, through Morganwg, Gwent, and Euas.

"The chiefs of song there, were Charles Bwttwn, Esq., Davyz ir Nant, (1680. presd.) Edward Davyz, of Margam, (1620. disc. 1660. presd.): associated with them

trines about the metempsychosis. These triads of course only prove that the bards of the middle ages had these notions; but it

were the following poets and bards, according to the privilege and custom of the bards of the Isle of Britain, being teachers of critical judgment: —

"And this, in the name of God, and all Good.

"Hywel. Lewys
John Roberts
Thomas Lewys
Davydd Edward
Sion Padam
Morgan Grufydd
Dav. Ivan Sion
Charles Dav. Meredydd
Hopcin Llywelyn
Lleision Evan
Jenkin Richards
Bleddyn Sion
Samuel Jones, Clerk."

*Beginning of Edward Davydd's Preface.*

"As I have from my youth taken a delight in the study of bardism, and to search the books of the bards and the best teachers, and more especially the books of the oldest bards of Wales; and also considering the injunctions given to the bards in the congress of Caerdyv (1620.), which was held in the castle there, through the protection, licence, and command of the Lord William Herbert, that they should search out, and establish anew the old order and regulation of the art of song and its relations, and as to the privileges and customs of the bards of the Isle of Britain, I fully gave up myself to the enterprise of trying whether I could contribute any kind of benefit to the design."

*Extracts from the Preface of Llywelyn Sion o Langewydd.* (1580. disc. Died, 1616.)

"The authors, teachers, and judges who sanctioned this system and code, were the druids and bards, after they had come to the faith in Christ; and they composed on the nine canons, that is, the nine primary principles of vocal song, and on the recurrent pause, the hupyrt and warrior triplet, which were with them metres of authority. Afterwards came Aneurin, Taliesin, Merddin, and others, who were primary bards of the Isle of Britain, who gave unanimous judgment with respect to song, and formed additional metres from the nine primary canons, namely, the two Toddaids, Englyn, Proest, Triban Cyrç, Llostawdyl, Clogyrnaç, and Cyngog; and afterwards were devised all the other metres, until they formed twenty-four in number, each of which originated from a particular and different character, irrelevant to the principles of each other; and more than that number, of such a nature, there cannot be of metrical principles.

"In the congress of Caermarthen (1450.), heterogeneous principles were introduced into the system, by the pertinacity of Dawydd ab Edmwnd. This induced Gwilym Tew (1460. presd.), Ieuan ab Hywel Swrdwal (1430. disc.) and J. Getthin, ab J. ab Lleision (1430. pres.) to oppose such an innovation, and they proclaimed a congress, under the notice of a year and a day, to be held on the mountain of Garth Maelog; and in addition to that, they obtained the authority of the country, and Lord Richard Nevill, as the lord paramount of Morganwg; and in that congress the bards of Morganwg, Gwent, and Euas, entered their protest, and repelled the regulation of Caermarthen, as repugnant to the privileges and customs of the bards of the Isle of Britain. From that time forwards, the three provinces before mentioned maintained by one consent their primitive regulation of science, and afterwards was obtained the authority for an exclusive congress for these three districts, through the grant of King Henry the Seventh. In the congresses that were held by virtue of this authority, it was given in judgment, and established as a rule, that the old system, with its regulation and principles of science, should be maintained; and from that time to this, there has been continued in Morganwg a complete opposition to the regulation of Caermarthen; with an injunction upon the members to search out the ancient practice and regulation of the science. But there were not then nearly so many metres in use, because they were not had in

is highly probable, that what they believed on this point they derived from their ancestors; and as we know that the Druids believed in transmigration, we may consider them as the source of the opinions.

They mention three regions of existence, which it is very curious to observe, they denominate cylchau, or circles.[1]

In the *cylch y Ceugant*, or the circle of the all-enclosing circle, there was nothing either alive or dead but God (Duw), and he only could pervade it. The circle of *Gwynvyd*, or felicity, is that which men are to pervade after they have passed through their terrestrial changes. But the circle of *Abred*, or evil, is that in which human nature passes through those varying stages of its existence which it must undergo before it is qualified to inhabit the circle of felicity.

All animated beings have three states of existence to pass through. The state of Abred, or evil in Annwn, or the great deep; the state of freedom, in the human form, and the state of love, which is happiness, in the nev, or heavens. All beings but God must therefore undergo three angen, or necessities: they must have a beginning in Annwn, or the great deep: a progression in Abred, or in the state of evil, and a completion in the circle of felicity in heaven.

In the evil state of Abred there are three angen, or necessities. There must be *existence* in its least possible degree, which is its commencement.—There must be the *matter* of every thing, from which proceeds increase, or progression of existence which cannot be in the other states, and there must be the *forms* of all things whence discriminating individuality.

The three necessary causes of the state of Abred, are to collect the matter of every nature, to collect the knowledge of every thing, and to collect power to destroy Gwrth, (the opposing,) and Cyth-

common practice; afterwards, however, many were found out, as may be seen in the books of Gwilym Tew, and William Edwad, who were bards of the chair of Morganwg. Since then Lewys Morganwg (1500. discd. & presc. 1520.), has written amply and more explicitly respecting the metres and the nature of their composition in his book of bardism. Subsequent to this, the bards of the three districts were summoned together in the castle of Caerdyv, under the protection and licence of the Lord William Herbert, where a congress was held (1529.), wherein judgment was given, with order and regulation of the science of song.

"Some time afterwards, Meiryg Davydd (1520. discd. 1560. presd. died, 1600.), compiled a book of bardism to his lord, Sir Edward Lewys, of the Van, in which there is seen a faithful view of the art of song, as to its nature and design. This book, I Llywelyn Sion o Langewydd, obtained; and from it I extracted nearly all that is in this book, except the verses by way of exemplifications, which I collected from here and there, out of books, and from different bards, and composed some myself, as well as I could; and in this book of my compiling is seen the system of Morganwg as to vocal song, and its various relations."

[1] We cannot avoid recollecting here, that the great Druidical temples of Stonehenge and Avebury, the smaller remains in Cornwall, that formerly in Jersey, now removed to Lord Conway's park, and others, exhibit *circles* of stones, as the essential form of their structure.

raul[1], and to divest ourselves of evil. Unless every state of being be thus passed through, there can be no perfection.

The three chief infelicities attached to the state of Abred are, that we incur necessity, oblivion, and death; and these things are the divine instruments for subduing evil (drwg), and Cythraul. The deaths which follow our changes are so many escapes from their power.

Humanity must necessarily suffer, change, and choose, and as it has the liberty of choosing, its sufferings and changes cannot be foreseen.

In passing through the changes of being, attached to the state of Abred, it is possible for man, by misconduct, to fall retrograde into the lowest state from which he had emerged.

There are three things which will inevitably plunge him back into the changes of Abred. Pride; for this he will fall to Annwn, which is the lowest point at which existence begins. Falsehood, which will replunge him to Obryn[2], and Cruelty, which will consign him to Cydvil[3]: from these he must proceed again in due course, through changes of being, up to humanity.

From this exposition, we see that the Bardic transmigration was from Annwn, through the changes of Abred, to the felicity of heaven. These changes never ended till man had fitted himself for heaven. If his conduct in any one state, instead of improving his being, had made it worse, he fell back into a worse condition, to commence again his purifying revolutions.

Humanity was the limit of the degraded transmigrations. All the changes above humanity were felicitating.

To acquire knowlege, benevolence, and power, is the object of the human state; and these, as they require liberty and choice, cannot be attained in any state previous to humanity. Knowlege, benevolence, and power, are the arms by which Drwg and Cythraul are to be subdued. Humanity is the scene of the contest.

I will now only add, that to have traversed every state of animated existence, to remember every state and its incidents, and to be able to traverse every state that can be desired for the sake of experience and judgment, is that consummation which can only be attained in the circle of felicity. In this circle man will be still undergoing rotations of existence, but happy ones, because God only can endure the eternities of the circle of infinity without changing. Man's happy changes in the circle of felicity will exhibit perpetual acquisition of knowlege, beautiful variety, and occasional repose.[4]

[1] Cythraul is the British name for the devil. It means the destroying principle. It may have been derived from the ancient mythology of the nation; I have therefore preserved the name in the text.

[2] Obryn literally means "something nearly equivalent." It therefore implies a degraded transmigration adequate to the fault committed.

[3] This literally means "a corresponding animal," or a transmigration into some ferocious animal.

[4] Copious extracts from the Book of Bardism, which contains these tenets, may be found at the end of the second volume of Mr. Edward Williams's poems, with

He may visit again the scenes of humanity for his pleasure, but cannot incur any moral depravity.

Such is the bardic doctrine of transmigration, as it appears in the Book of Bardism. How far it transmits the tenets of the druids on this subject, or what modifications Christianity introduced, cannot now be ascertained.

By recollecting this doctrine of transmigrations, we may understand many passages of Taliesin. His Hanes Taliesin is a recital of his pretended transmigrations; and when we read in his other poems, that he has been in various animal shapes, as a serpent[1], a wild sow, a buck, or a crane, and such like, we must call to mind, that those scenes of existence in Abred, which were between Annwn and humanity, were the changes of being in the bodies of different animals. One great privilege of the being who was far advanced in his progression to the circle of felicity, was to remember all the states through which he had passed. Taliesin seems to have been eager to establish his claims to such a successful probation. He is perpetually telling us what he has been. Oblivion was one of the curses of Abred; the recovery of memory was a proof that Drwg and Cythraul began to be overcome. Taliesin therefore as profusely boasts of his recovered reminiscence as any modern sectary can do of his state of grace and election.

There is so much of Taliesin's poetry which no one can understand, that I cannot but place him, in point of intrinsic merit, below the other bards, although, in the estimation of his countrymen, he seems to have been ranked in a superior class.

His Cad Goddeu, the Battle of the Trees, is eminently incomprehensible, and so are others. That I may not be thought to condemn him unjustly, I will beg leave to present the reader with his poem, called Preiddeu Annwn, the Spoils of Annwn. If its allusions are at all historical, they are too much involved in mythology to be comprehended. In his mead song, there is a connected train of thought. In the following poem, all connection of thought seems to have been studiously avoided.[2]

## PREIDDEU ANNWN.

Praise to the Lord, supreme ruler of the high region,[3]
Who hath extended his dominion to the shores of the world.

translations. I cannot speak of this gentleman without mentioning his talents with high respect. He has died this year, 1827. He was an ardent lover of his native Wales and of its ancient literature.

[1] Wyf sarph, p. 27. — bum bwch. — bum banhwch. — bum garan, p. 44.

[2] It is, however, fair to remark, that if the Mabinogion and all the Welsh remains were to be accurately studied, it is probable, that enough might be gathered from them to elucidate some of the allusions of Taliesin to the opinions, tales, and traditions of his day. This would make intelligible many passages now obscure.

[3] Golych wledig pendefig gwad ri
Pe ledas y pennaeth tros draeth mundi
Bu cywair carchar Gwair ynghaer Sidi
Trwy dybostol Pwyll a Phryderi

Complete was the prison of Gwair in Caer Sidi,
Through the anger of Pwyll and Pryderi,

---

Neb cyn nog ef nid aeth iddi
Yr gadwyn dromlas cywirwas ai cedwi
A rhac Prieddieu Annwn tost y geni
Ac yd frawd parahawd yn barddwedi
Tri lloneid prydwen ydd aetham ni iddi
Nam saith ny dyrraith o Gaer Sidi
Neud wyf glod geymyn cerdd o chlywir
Ynghaer Pedryfan pedyr y chwelyd
Ynghynueir or pair pan leferid
O anadl naw morwyn gochynnessid
Neu pair pen annwfn pwy *uynud*
Gwrym am ei oror a Mererid
Ni beirw bwyd llwrf ni rydyngid
Kleddyf lluch lleawc iddaw rhyddychid
Ac yn llaw Lleminawg ydd edewid
A rhag drws porth Uffern llugyrn lloscid
A phan aetham ni gan Arthur trafferth ilethrid
Namyn saith ni ddyrraith o Gear Vediuid
Neud wyf glod geimyn cerdd glywanawr
Ynghaer Pedryfan Ynys Pybyrddor
Echwydd a Muchydd cymysgettor
Gwin gloyw eu gwirawd rhag ei gosgordd
Tri lloneid Prydwen ydd aetham ni ar for
Namyn saith ni ddyrraith o Gaer Rigor
Ni obrynaf lawyr llen llywiadur
Tra chaer wydr ni welsynt wrhyd Arthur
Tri ugeint canhwr a sefi ar y mur
Oedd anawdd ymadrawdd ai gwiliadur
Tri lloneid Prydwen yd aeth gan Arthur
Namyn saith ni ddyrraith o Gaer Goludd
Ni obrynaf i lawyr llaes eu cylchwy
Ny wyddant hwy py ddydd peridydd pwy
Py awr ym meinddydd y ganed Cwy
Pwy gwnaeth ar nid aeth dolau Defwy
Ny wddant hwy yr ych brych bras ei benrhwy
Seith ugein cygwn yn ei aerwy
A phan aetham ni gan Arthur afrddwl gofwy
Namyn saith ni ddyrraith o Gaer Vandwy
Ni obrynaf lwyr llaes ei gevyn
Ni wddant py ddydd peridydd pen
Py awr ym meinddydd y ganed perchen
Py fil a gatwant ariant y pen
Pan aetham ni gan Arthur afrddwl gynhen
Namyn saith ni ddyrraith a Gaer Ochren
Mynaich dychnud fal cunin cor
O gyfranc uddydd ai Gwiddanhor
Ai un hynt gwynt ai un dwfr mor
Ai un ufel tan twrwf diachor
Myneich dychnud fal bleiddawr
O gyfranc uddydd ai gwyddyanhawr
Ni wddant pan ysgar deweint a gwawr
Neu wynt pwy hynt pwy ei rynnawdd
Py *va* ddifa py dir a plawdd
Bed Sant yn ddifant o bet allawr
Golychaf i wledig pendefig mawr
Na bwyf trist Crist am gwaddawl. P. 45.

No one before him went to it.
A heavy blue chain held the faithful youth,
And before the spoils of Annwn gloomily he sings:
And till doom shall continue in his lay.
Thrice the fulness of Pridwen, we went into it.
Except seven, none returned from Caer Sidi.

Am I not a candidate for fame to be heard in the song?
In Caer Pedryfan, four times revolving,
In the first word from the cauldron when it was expressed
From the breath of nine damsels it began to be warmed.
Is it not the cauldron of the chief of Annwn, in its fashion
A ridge round its edge of pearls!
It will not boil the food of a coward not sworn
A sword bright flashing to him was brought
And in the hand of Llaminawg was left,
And before the passage of the gate of Uffern (or hell)
The horns of light were burning.
And when we went with Arthur, in his labours like lightning,
Except seven, none returned from Caer Vedivid.

Am I not a candidate for fame in the song to be listened to?
In Caer Pedryvan, in the isle of Pybyrddor,
The twilight and the jet of night moved together,
Bright wine their beverage before their hosts;
Three times the fulness of Prydwen we went on the sea,
Except seven, none returned from Caer Rhegor.

I will not have merit from the multitude with the ensign of the governor;
Beyond Caer Wydr they beheld not the prowess of Arthur;
Three times twenty hundred men stand on the wall,
He will be unprotected who converses with its sentinel.
Three times the fulness of Prydwen we went with Arthur,
Except seven, none returned from Caer Coludd.

I will not have merit from the multitudes with trailing shield,
They knew not on what day, or who caused it,
Nor what hour in the splendid day Cwy was born;
Nor who made that he went not to the meanders of Defwy:
They knew not the brindled ox, with his thick head-band,
Seven score knobs in his collar.
And when we went with Arthur of mournful memory,
Except seven, none returned from Caer Vandwy.

I will not have merit from the multitudes of drooping courage;
They knew not what day the chief was caused,
Nor what hour in the splendid day the owner was born;
What animal they keep of silver head.
When we went with Arthur of mournful contention;
Except seven, none returned from Caer Ochren.

Monks pack together like dogs in the choir,
From their meetings with their witches;
One has the course of the wind, one the water of the sea,
One the burning of the fire, of unbounded tumult.

Monks pack together like wolves,
From their meetings with their witches,
They know not when the twilight and the dawn divide,
Nor what the course of the wind, nor who agitates it,
In what place it dies, on what region it roars,
The grave of the saint vanishing from the foot of the altar.
I will pray to the Lord, the great Supreme,
That I be not wretched—may Christ be my portion.[1]

Could Lycophron or the Sibyls, or any ancient oracle, be more elaborately incomprehensible?

In his historical poems, Taliesin is more level to our perceptions. When he sounds his harp in praise of Urien, we can understand and applaud the lay. I will give a specimen of this in his

## DADOLWCH URIEN.

*The Reconciliation with Urien.*

Be the lion the most implacable![2]
I will not revile him.

[1] See a note on this poem in the Appendix.

[2] Lleu uydd echassaf
Mi nyw dirmygaf
Urien yd gyrchaf
Iddaw yd ganaf
Pan ddel fyngwaeslaf
Cynwys a gaffaf
Or part hgoreuhaf
Y dan eilassaf
Nid mawr nim dawr
Byth gweheleith a welaf
Nid af attadynt ganthynt ni byddaf
Ni chyfarchaf fi gogledd
Ar mei teyrnedd
Cyn pei am laweredd
Y gwelwn gynghwystledd
Nid rhaid ym hoffedd
Urien nim gommedd
Llwyfenydd diredd
Ys meu eu rheufedd
Ys meu y gwyledd
Ys meu y llaredd
Ys meu y deliedeu
Ai gorefrasseu
Medd o fauleu
A da dicisieu
Gan deyrn golau
Haelaf rygigleu
Teyrnedd pob Iaith
It oll ydynt gaith
Rhagot yt gwynir ys dir dy olaith

But Urien I will approach,
And to him I will sing.
When he who is my assurance comes,
I shall obtain superintendence,
Of the most excellent part,
Under the flow of melody.
The endless lineage which I see
Concerns me not much;
I shall not go to them nor be with them,
I will not address myself to the north,
But to my
First, if there should be multitudes about
That I might see mutual pledging;
Their affection is not necessary to me,
For Urien will not refuse me
The lands of Llwyfenydd.
Mine will be their riches,
Mine will be their wilds,
Mine will be their produce,
Mine will be their beauties;
And their luxuries,
Mead out of bugles,
And good inexhaustible,
From a splendid prince.
The most generous that has been heard of
The kings of every language,
To thee are all captive.
For thee there will be mourning when thy death shall be certain,
Whilst it would menace me.
After possession I will declare,
That there was none I could better love;
As far as I could know.
At times I behold
The extent of what I shall obtain.
Excepting to God most high,

---

Cydef mynnasswn
Gwedy helu henwn
Nid oedd wel a gerwn
Hyd ys gwybyddwn
Weithian y gwelaf
Y meint a gaffaf
Namyn y Duw uchaf
Nis dioferaf
Dy deyrn Veibon
Haelaf dynedon
Wy canau eu hysgyron
Yn nhiredd eu galon
Ac yn y vallwyf hen
Ym dygyn angeu angen
Ni byddaf im dirwen
Na molwyf Urien.

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I will not renounce
Thy royal sons
The most generous of men.
Their shafts resound
In the lands of their foes;
And until I shall wither old,
In my severe death of fate;
I shall not be happy,
Unless I am praising Urien.[1]

As Taliesin's poem on the battle of Argoed Llwyfain has been much alluded to by the bards of the middle ages, I will also cite it. Fiamddwyn is a word implying *flame-bearing*, and is supposed to have been the name by which the Britons distinguished Ida. It is certain that Ida fought in this quarter.

## BATTLE OF ARGOED LLWYFAIN.

In the morning of the day of Sadwrn was a great battle[2]
From when the sun emerged till it flamed on high;
Flamddwyn hastened quickly with four bodies
To encompass Goddeu and Reged:
He spread from Argoed to Arfynydd.
They retained not life till the day expired.

[1] I have been much indebted to Mr. Owen for his assistance in my Welsh translations. In every difficulty of construction I have taken his opinion as my guide.

[2] Y bore Dduw Sadwrn Cad fawr a fu
Or pan ddwyre Haul hyd pan gynnu
Dygrysowys Fflamddwyn yn bedwarllu
Goddeu a Reged i ymddullu
Dyfwy o Argoed hyd Arfynydd
Ni cheffynt eiryoes hyd yr undydd
Atorelwis Fflamddwyn fawr drybestawd
A ddodynt yngwystlon a ynt parawd
Yr attebwys Owain ddwyrain ffossawd
Nid dodynt nid ydynt nid ynt parawd
A cheneu mab Coel byddai Cymwyawg lew
Cyn attalai owystl nebawd
Atorelwis Urien Udd yr echwydd
O bydd ynghyfarfod am garennydd
Dyrchafwn eidoed odduch mynydd
Ac ymporthwn wyneb odduch emyl
A drychafwn beleidr odduch ben Gwyr
A chyrchwn Fflamddwyn yn ei luydd
A lladdwn ag ef ai gyweithydd
A rhag Gwaith Argoed Llwyfain
Bu llawer Celain
Rhuddei frain rhag rhyfel Gwyr
A gwerin a grysswys gan einewydd
Arinaf y blwyddyn nad wyf Kynnydd
Ac yn y fallwyf hen
Ym dygn angeu angen
Ni byddif ym dyrwen
No molwyf Urien. P. 53.

Flamddwyn demanded with great impetuosity,
"Will they give hostages? are these ready?"
He was answered by Owen, uprising the blow,
"They will not give them, they are not, shall not be ready,
And Cheneu, son of Coel, would be like an irritated lion
But he would withhold hostages from any one."
Urien, the lord of peaceful cultivation, exclaimed,
"Being assembled for our kindred,
Let us elevate our banners above the mountains,
And push forward our forces over the borders,
And lift our spears over the warriors' heads,
And rush upon Flamddwyn in his army,
And slaughter with him and his followers."
From the battle of Argoed Llwyfain was many a corpse;
The ravens were red from the war of men,
And the multitude hastened with the tidings.
I will celebrate the year,
I am not increasing,
But in age am declining,
Yet in the severe death of necessity,
I shall not be in smiles,
Unless I am praising Urien.

Of Taliesin's poetry we may say, in general, that his historical poems are valuable: his others are obscure; but as they contain much old mythology and bardic imagery, they are worth attention, because some parts may be illustrated and made intelligible.

We may now consider the chief objections urged against these poems.

### FIRST OBJECTION.

They have used rime; but rime, say the objectors, was not known to Europe in the sixth century. "The only opinions which now divide the learned on this subject" are "whether the use of rime originated from the Saracens, who took possession of Sicily in the year 828, or arose among the Italian monks in the eighth century." But "it is certain, that it was totally unknown to the ancient language of Europe."[1]

This has been the great objection, the most confidently relied upon, and the most vehemently pressed against the genuineness of these poems. I own when I first heard of it, it sounded very formidably to me. If this account of the use of rime was true, the Welsh bards must have been given up. I therefore took some trouble to enquire into its correctness.

I found that this preremptory opinion, about the use of rime, was a complete delusion. I stated the fruit of my researches in two essays which were read before the Antiquarian Society, and have been since printed in its Transactions.

[1] Critical Review, Jan. 1800.

By decisive and authentic examples from authors who were there quoted, the use of rime was traced, from age to age, into the fourth century. It was showed that it was used in Latin poetry in the very century in which these bards lived, and in the centuries preceding. The subject was pursued into the classical times. I intimated the reasons and the authorities which supported the opinion of Muratori, that rime was an appendage of the vulgar unmetrical poetry of the Romans. And I showed its great antiquity in the languages of China, Hindostan, and Judea, as well as Arabia.

My examples of rime between the ninth century and the fourth were taken from these authors:

| | |
|---|---|
| Ninth Century, | Otfrid. |
| Eighth Century, | The song of the Lombards. |
| | Boniface. |
| | Leobgytha. |
| | Cœna. |
| Seventh Century, | Aldhelm. |
| | The Frankish Song. |
| | Eugenius. |
| | Drepanius Florus. |
| | Columbanus. |
| And in the Sixth Century, | Venantius Fortunatus. |

Of this author I cited two riming poems, and pointed out several riming passages in his other works. This first essay will be added to this Appendix.

In my second essay I showed the use of rime in the fourth century, in the poem of St. Austin against the Donatists. In his short preface to this poem, St. Austin says:

"Volens etiam causam Donatistarum ad ipsius humillimis vulgi et omnino imperitorum atque idiotarum notitiam pervenire et eorum quantum fieri posset par nos inherere memoriæ, psalmum qui eis cantaretur per Latinas literas feci sed usque ad v literam, tales enim abdecedarios appellant, tres vero ultimas omisi, &c."

*The Psalm begins thus:*

'Abundantia peccatorum solet fratres conturbare,
Propter hoc Dominus noster voluit nos præmonere,
Comparans regnum cœlorum, reticulo misso in mare
Congreganti multos pisces, omne genus hinc et inde,
Quos cum traxissent, ad littus tunc cœperunt separare,
Bonos in vasa miserunt, reliquos malos in mare
Quisquis recolit Evangelium, recognoscat cum timore
Videt reticulum ecclesiam, videt hoc seculum mare,
Genus autem mixtum Piscis, justus est cum peccatore,
Seculi finis est littus, tunc est tempus separare,
Quando retia ruperunt, multum dilexerunt mare,
Vasa sunt sedes sanctorum, quo non possent pervenire."[1]

[1] Austin's Works, vol. vii. p. 3. Lyons, 1586.

Twenty similar stanzas of twelve lines each follow the preceding, all ending in *e*, and each stanza beginning with a successive letter of the alphabet as far as *v*.

Thus the objection of the Welsh bards are forgeries, because their poems are rimed, is completely overturned. Rime was in being in Europe long before they rimed.

After these facts, can we avoid smiling when we read such a passage as this?

"We would assume opposite grounds, and pronounce at once, that the use of rhyme *presents mathematical demonstration* that those poems are glaring forgeries." [1]

How an *historical* fact, even if it had been as the critic thought, could make a *mathematical* [2] demonstration, he has yet to explain! But whatever sort of demonstration he meant, the facts, as to the use of rime, instead of proving the poems to be forgeries, are auspicious to their genuineness.

SECOND OBJECTION.

The next objection, which has been so triumphantly used, is this:

But Giraldus "does not even mention the use of rhyme among his countrymen; or if it at all existed, he considered it as rude and rustic when compared with alliteration. Any reader will perceive that this implied neglect in the one case, or positive censure in the other, could never have been expressed by a writer so ardent for the glory of his country, to the actual condemnation of all its illustrious bards. It follows, therefore, that all those pieces ascribed to the early Welsh poets *are posterior to the days of Giraldus*." [3]

In support of these objections, a passage of Giraldus is quoted, the import of which is, that the Welsh poets were chiefly fond of such ornaments as alliteration. Giraldus adds, "a Welsh poet, therefore, would thus have expressed himself:"

Digawn duw da y unic
Wrth bob crybwylh parawd.[4]

This objection is not a fact, but an inference, and the reasoning stands precisely thus:

Giraldus either does not mention rime, or considered it as rude and rustic;

But Giraldus was ardent for the glory of his country:

Therefore he would not have condemned rime if the ancient bards had used it, and therefore all the rimed pieces

[1] This gentleman seems to have been fond of this emphatic epithet; for after assuming, and then asserting, that the poems in question were unknown to Nennius, Geoffrey, and Caradoc, he says, "we may conclude with a *mathematical* certainty, that they are modern fabrications." Surely *historical* certainty and *mathematical* certainty are not quite identical.

[2] Critical Review, January 1800, p. 22.

[3] Ibid p. 23.

[4] Ibid.

ascribed to the early Welsh poets are *posterior* to the days of Giraldus

The logician will not admire the closeness of this reasoning, as applied to a question of fact. To determine the genuineness of these poems by Giraldus's estimation of rime, is as correct a method of reaching the truth, as it would be to decide against the genuineness of Dryden's rimed tragedies, because modern critics prefer blank verse. It is also a modern discovery in criticism, that if an author thinks the ancient poems of his country rude and rustic, he therefore affirms them to be forgeries. The critic argues, that because Giraldus thought the use of rime rude and rustic, therefore these ancient poems which are rimed are forgeries.

If a reasoner ask why is this inference made? the objector's answer is, that a writer so ardent for the glory of his country, would not by such terms as rude and rustic, have condemned its illustrious bards. Therefore these poems could not have existed in the time of Giraldus. This sort of reasoning is in fact an assertion, that the poetry which a patriotic writer calls rude and rustic, cannot be the works of the ancient bards of his country.

But Horace, though a patriot, never hesitated to describe the poems of Ennius or Lucilius as rude and rustic, and yet he thought them genuine. Our Lydgate and Chaucer are rather rude and rustic, and yet no writer, however ardent for the glory of old England, would suspect, that in so considering them, he was impeaching their genuineness.

Nothing can more strongly show the inapplicability of the objection than the fact, that we have the authority of Giraldus himself, to prove that the works of the old bards of his country, which he actually deemed genuine, he, yet, did think rude and rustic in the strongest sense. The very words in which he speaks of Merdhin's poetry are, "Britannicam barbarien," "British barbarism." I have already quoted the passage, he does more: he uses the very phrase of the objector; he calls the style, "the *rude* and plain simplicity of the ancient style," and again, "the darkness of the barbaric tongue." [1]

But the critic means to insinuate, that Giraldus either did not know that rime was used in Welsh poetry, or thought such rimed poetry rude and rustic. It happens, unfortunately for such an insinuation, that *every* Welsh bard of *every* age used rime. Rime is essential to Welsh poetry. The poems of many bards, in the days of Giraldus, yet exist, and they are all rimed. Could Giraldus then mean to decry rime, to depreciate such poetry as used it, to hint that it was not genuine? The moment any gentleman looks over the first volume of the Welsh Archaiology and finds 584 pages of poems in double columns all rimed and all written before the fourteenth century, he might answer the question himself on the mere probability of the case.

[1] Sermonis antiqui *rudis* et plana simplicitas — barbaræ linguæ tenebras. — See before.

But Giraldus can also answer this question for himself. So far is it from being true, that Giraldus was ignorant that his countrymen used rime, that Giraldus expressly mentions that they *do* use rime; and what is more — what is scarcely credible — he mentions this fact in the very passage which the angry critic adduces to prove the contrary. I dislike to use harsh words, and will therefore make no observations on this circumstance. It may have arisen from some casual mistake. The beginning of the passage of Giraldus, as the critic translates and quotes it, is, "they are so subtle and ingenious in their songs, verses, and set speeches, that they produce, in their native tongue, ornaments of wonderful and exquisite invention in their words and in their sentences."[1]

Now the words translated, "songs, verses, and set speeches," are in the original "*cantilenis rythmicis,* et dictamine," not *songs, verses,* but *rimed songs.* So that Giraldus, instead of discrediting rimed poems, as the critic asserts, begins the passage by saying, that it is of the rimed songs that he speaks, and that it is these rimed songs which possess the ornaments that he proceeds to applaud.[2]

One of the examples, which I cited in the essay on rime, read in the Antiquarian Society, and which I have not seen elsewhere

[1] In cantilenis, rythmicis, et dictamine tam subtiles inveniuntur ut mire et exquisitæ inventionis lingua propria tam verborum quam sententiarum proferant exornationes. Unde et poetas (quos Bardos vocant) ad hoc deputatos in hac natione multos invenies, juxta illud poeticum:

Plurima concreti fuderunt carmina Bardi.

Præ cunctis autem Rhetoricis exornationibus annominatione magis utuntur, eaque præcipue specie, quæ primas dictionum literas vel syllabas convenientia jungit. Adeo igitur hoc verborum ornatu, duæ nationes Angli scil. et Cambri in omni sermone exquisito utuntur, ut nihil ab his eleganter dictum, nullum nisi rude et agreste censeatur eloquium si non schematis hujus lima plene fuerit expolitum, sicut Britannice in hunc modum.

Digawn duw da y unic,
Wrth bob crybwylh parawd.

Anglice vero,

God is together gammen and wisdome. In Latino quoque haud dissimiliter eloquio eandem exornationem frequens est invenire in hunc modum. Virgilius,

Talem casum Cassandra canebat,
Et illud ejusdem ad Augustum.
Dum dubitet natura marem, faceret se puellam
Natus es o pulcher pene puella puer.

In nullis tamen linguis quas novimus, hæc exornatio adeo ut in prioribus duabus est usitata. — Girald. Cambria Descript. p. 889, 890. ap. Camd. Anglica Hibernica, &c. Francf. 1601.

[2] There can be no doubt, that cantilenis rythmicis in the twelfth century, meant rimed songs. There can be as little doubt, that to omit the word rythmicis entirely in the translation, and to substitute for it the word verses, and to produce the passage thus wrongly translated as an authority, that Giraldus does not even mention the use of rime among his countrymen, was improper. I may remark that cantilenis rythmicis, in the MS. in the Cotton Library, has not in the printed copy a comma between them.

quoted, will, I think, illustrate the meaning of the word *rythmicis* in Giraldus, and the true application of his passage.

Aldhelm, the celebrated bishop of the West Saxons, who died 709, in his Treatise on Virginity, has this passage; "ut non inconvenienter carmine *rythmico* dici queat."[1] Here we find the same adjective, rythmicus, used, as by Giraldus. The example which Aldhelm immediately annexes proves that it exactly corresponds with our word rimed. The example is,

Christus passus patibulo
Atque læti latibulo
Virginem virgo virgini
Commendabat tutamini.

This is precisely a cantilena rythmica composed to the full taste of Giraldus. It has the annominato which he loved, just as it frequently occurs in Welsh poetry.

There is another proof that Giraldus knew well the use of rime among his countrymen. The two Welsh lines cited by Giraldus—

Digawn Duw da y unic
and
Wrth bob crybwylh parawd,

are two distinct unconnected lines, part of two old *riming* stanzas which occur in a poem which is ascribed to the tenth century. The complete stanza, containing the first line, is,

A glyweisti a gant Duinnic
Milur doeth detholedic
*Digaun Duw da y unic.*[2]

The other lines Giraldus, or his transcriber, has not quoted so correctly. The complete stanza is,

A glyweisti a gant Anaraut
Milur donyauc ditlaut
Reit wrth amhwyll pwyll paraut.[3]

As the last line stands in the printed Giraldus, it is obviously miscopied. Giraldus adduced it as a specimen of the annominatio, but as it is printed in his work,

Wrth bob crybwylh paraud,[4]

where is the annominatio? In the real line which I have quoted, we see it in the two similar letters of pwyll and paraut, and in the similar sounds of *amhwyll* and pwyll.

Let us not then be told that Giraldus is evidence, that rime was not used by the Welsh bards.[5]

[1] Aldhelm de Virgin. p. 297. Wharton's edition.

[2] See the whole poem in the Welsh Archaiology, p. 172. [3] Ibid.

[4] In the MS. of this tract of Giraldus, in the Cotton Library, Domitian A. I. p. 122. This line is thus quoted:—rbyn dibuilh puilh paraut. This is somewhat nearer the true line than the printed one.

[5] It is curious to observe, how much stress has been laid on the fancied igno-

What is it then, which Giraldus really says, in the passage so ostentatiously, but so mistakingly, quoted? It is this: that the Welsh bards in their rimed songs had those ornaments which he calls, of wonderful and exquisite invention in the words and in their sentences; and of which he particularizes the annominatio; he does not say that they had these ornaments without rime, but that in their rimed songs they cultivated these ornaments. Now this statement is precisely the real truth. The Welsh poems of all ages are rimed, but have also those alliterative ornaments of which Giraldus was so fond.

It was not poems with rime which Giraldus called rude and rustic, but it was the poetry which was without alliteration. The alliteration was the beauty which no poems omitted, but such as were rude and rustic.

Therefore, besides the misconstruction of the cantilenis rythmicis, the critic has clearly mistaken the sense of the passage. Giraldus was speaking of alliteration — he quotes Welsh passages which have it, an old English line that has it, and he proceeds to quote two passages of Virgil which have also alliteration. Now, if it had been true, that the old bards had not used alliteration, then the epithets "rude and rustic" would have applied to them.

But the fact is, that the old bards abound with alliteration, though not so frequently as the poets of the following ages, in whose works it is almost incessant. I will now adduce instances in Taliesin and others, of that annominatio which Giraldus so much esteemed.

Creadur cadarn cyn dilyw —
Ar meirch mawr modur mirein eu gwedd —
Meddwer Maelgwn Mon ag an meddwa —
Med hedleid moleid molud i bob tra.

These occur with several others in one page.
So Llywarch Hên. In his first elegy are,

A gwedy gawr garw bwylliad —
A gorvod gwedy gorborth —
Gwyr ni giliynt rhag ovn gwaew —
A gwyr rudd rhag ruthr Geraint. —

With several more.

Merddin also uses it, though more sparingly,

rance of Giraldus of rime in Welsh verse. Mr. Malcolm Laing, in his Dissertation on Ossian's Poems, annexed to his History of Scotland, very decisively says, vol. ii. p. 436., speaking of rime, "In Welsh poetry it *was unknown to Giraldus Cambrensis* in the twelfth century, a *sufficient* proof that the rhymes of Taliesin and the Welsh bards are a more recent forgery." I am much surprised, that any gentleman of character should speak so positively upon Welsh poetry without knowing any thing about it. Independent of the above proofs from Giraldus himself that he knew of rime; how could it be unknown to him, when Meilyr, Gwalchmai, Cynddelw, Owain Cyveiliawg, Llywarch P. Moch, David Benvras, and Elidyr Sais; all men of great genius and reputation, were using it in all their poems in Giraldus's lifetime?

Yn gyfoed gyfuch gyhyd gymmaint
Trwy fron trugaredd y tyseddaint.

Thus we find the ancient bards actually exhibit not only rime, but also these ornaments which Giraldus so much applauded. Of course the passage of Giraldus, which has been so much relied upon, is, in no respect, hostile to their genuineness.

I pass by the objection that Nennius, Jeffrey, and Caradoc, do not mention these bards, because I have already shown, that Nennius and Jeffrey, and many Welsh writers of the age of Caradoc expressly mention them.

I know but of one more objection, which requires to be answered, and I approach it with respect, because it has been also urged by men of candour and judgment.[1]

It is in substance this: we find these poems placed in the sixth century, and we find none occurring before the twelfth century. This leaves an interval so suspicious, as to operate very strongly against the genuineness of any poetry earlier than the twelfth century. This objection is a fair one, and calls for a satisfactory answer. I hope to give such a one by proving these things.

1. That there are some few poems of the centuries between the sixth and twelfth yet in being.
2. That many bards are recorded to have existed during this interval.
3. That the ravages of time are capricious, and that similar chasms occur in the literary history of other countries.

1. Of the seventh century we have the small poems preserved to us of Meigant[2], Elaeth[3], and Tysilio.[4] Of the eighth century, there is one poem of Golyddan[5], and two of Cuhelyn.[6] There is also a little piece of Llevoed of the tenth century[7], and there are some anonymous pieces which seem to belong to the tenth and eleventh.[8]

2. The laws of Howel Dha show a regular and much-respected establishment of bards in the tenth century, as I have already mentioned.[9] This is a proof, which cannot be controverted, that bards did flourish during the interval which has been thought so unfavourable.

But other documents furnish us with the names of several of

[1] See Monthly Review of the Welsh Archaiology.
[2] An elegy on Cynddylan and an ode. Welsh. Arch. p. 159, 160.
[3] Moral Triplets, p. 161.
[4] A Religious Dialogue, p. 162.
[5] The Destiny of Britain, p. 156.
[6] Two Religious Odes, p. 164. 180.
[7] The Journey of Life, a Moral Piece, p. 154.
[8] As the Dialogue between Arthur Cai and Glewwlyd, Welsh Art, p. 167.
The Englynion y Clyweit, or a collection of the sayings of the earlier bards, p. 172.
The Dialogue between Arthur and Gwenhwyfar, p. 175.
The Dialogue between Arthur and Eliwlod, p. 176.
The Dialogue between Trystan and Gwalchmai, p. 178.
And some fragments.
[9] See before, p. 495, 496.

these bards. A triad mentions Avan Verddig, the bard of Cadwallon, the son of Cadvan[1] and Dygynnelw, the bard of Owain, the son of Urien. Of the other bards who lived in the sixth century, the aphorisms of six have been preserved: Idloes, Ysgafnell, Ciwg, Ystyfan, Heinin, and Cennydd.

Hast thou heard what Idloes sang,
A man mild and amiable in his life:
"The best quality is to preserve manners."[2]

Hast thou heard what Ysgavnell sang,
The son of Dysgyvundod, the impulse of battle?
"The poor will not be presented with gifts from afar."[3]

Hast thou heard what Ciwg sang,
The completely wise bard of Gwynhylwg:
"Who possesses discretion has a long sight."[4]

Hast thou heard the saying of Ystyfan (or Stephen),
The bard of Teilo of quick reply:
"Man covets, but God distributes."[5]

Hast thou heard the saying of Heinin,
The bard of the Bangor of Llanveithin:
"The brave will not be cruel."[6]

The saying of Cennydd, the son of Aneurin, has been already given.[7]

In the ninth century were Cynllwg and Geraint the Blue Bard, who have left these aphorisms:

[1] Archaiol. vol. ii. p. 64.

[2] A glyweisti a gant Idloes
Gwr gwar, hygar ei einoes:
"Goreu cynneddv cadw moes."
Cited by Mr. Owen in his *Cambrian Biography*, p. 194, and his *Dictionary*, voce Moes.

[3] A glyweisti a gant Ysgafnell,
Vab Dysgyvundaut Ratgymell:
"Nyt anregyt tlaut o bell." *Englyn. y Clyweit.* W. A. 173.

[4] A glyweisti a gant Ciwg,
Bardd cyweirddoeth Gwynhylwg:
"Perchen pwyll pell ei olwg."
*Ibid. another MS. copy not yet printed.*

[5] A glyweisti çwedyl Ystyfan,
Bardd Teilaw atteb bwan:
"Dyn a çwennydç: Duw a ran." *Ibid.*

[6] A glyweisti çwedyl Heinin,
Vardd o vangor Llanveithin:
"Gwrawl ni vydd ddysgethrin." *Ibid.*

[7] See before.

Hast thou heard the saying of Cynllwg,
A hoary bard of extensive sight:
"He enjoys good, who has not evil."[1]

Hast thou heard the saying of the Blue Bard,
Giving social counsel:
"Better the favour of a dog, than his hate."[2]

In the tenth century several bards have had their observations on life preserved to us.

Hast thou heard the saying of Myvenydd,
A bard with a genius fond of books,
"There is no good governor but God."[3]

Hast thou heard the saying of Divwg,
The bard of old Morgan Morganwg:
"Who seeks not good, may expect evil."[4]

Didst thou hear the saying of Idwallon,
A hoary old man, resting on his staff:
"With the ignorant hold no dispute."[5]

3. Nothing is more remarkable and often more lamentable in literary history, than the apparent capriciousness with which the ravages of time appear to have been exerted on ancient MSS. Many valuable works have perished, and some worthless ones have escaped. The books of some periods and of some countries have disappeared and others have survived, without any adequate reason for either event. No argument can therefore have less force than this. We may as well interrogate Time, why his production of human genius is so irregular as to exact critical demonstration, why his ravages upon its labours have been so inconstant and partial.

In every country this partial destruction of literature is apparent. What a chasm exists in the works of Grecian genius before Homer and after him. Such a perfect exhibition of human talent must have been preceded by many productions of the poetic art. But

[1] A glyweisti çwedyl Cynllwg,
Vardd llwyd, llydan ei olwg;
"Cavas dda ni çavas ddrwg."
*Englyn. y Clyweit.* W. A. 173.

[2] A glyweisti çwedyl y Bardd Glas,
Yn rhoi cyhghor cyweithas:
"Gwell cariad y ci noi gas." *Ibid.*

[3] A glyweisti çwedyl Myvenydd,
Bardd llyvreugar ei wenydd:
"Namyn Duw nid madlywydd." *Ibid.*

[4] A glyweisti çwedyl Divwg,
Bardd hên Vorgan Morganwg:
"Na çais y da, aroed y drwg." *Ibid.*

[5] Cambrian Biography, p. 195.

where are they? and what has become of the works which followed? Homer stands sublime, like a towering island in an expansive ocean. Hesiod is a little islet near him, but there is scarce any thing else to connect him with his ancestors or successors. But because Homer and Hesiod shone in one age, and Eschylus, Sophocles, and Pindar, in a later period, we are not so unjust as to brand the Iliad of the one, or the works and days of the others as surreptitious productions. In Judea, David, Solomon, and Isaiah, shone with excelling merit. But what a darkness between Moses and David, and Solomon and Isaiah? Another interval of gloom succeeded after the prophets, and the author of Ecclesiasticus appeared. After another interruption, came Josephus and Philo, and what a Cimmerian midnight since!

Where are the historians and poets of Phenicia, Carthage, and Egypt? We know that many existed and wrote; we know that two of these nations were the tutors of Greece, and the other the competitor of Rome; and yet all their literary compositions, however curious, or however meritorious, have passed away from human knowlege, like the clouds which dropped their treasures on their fields; like the myriads of population, which swarmed in their cities, and established their fame.

We have the Frankish poetry of Otfrid in 850, and we scarcely know the names of any other Frankish poets, who came after him in the centuries immediately following. Shall he be, therefore, discredited? What chasms exist in the literature of Persia, Arabia, and Hindustan?

The ebbs and flows of intellect and literature in every nation appear very capricious, and obey no fixed rules.

Our own country has abounded with these vicissitudes. While the Romans were with us, the national mind must have been ameliorated. The Saxons came, and mental darkness followed. The sun of intellect streaked the gloom with its orient rays, and Bede, Alcuin, and others adorned the Saxon name. The furies of the north shrouded the hemisphere with their tempests, and priests even forgot to read their services. ALFRED reigned, and the glorious beam burst through the stormy cloud, called forth by his magic voice, and irradiating his paths. A premature evening succeeded; the faint light which glimmered afterwards soon disappeared in the Norman midnight. But the dawn of reason again returned; it struggled with the interposing clouds; it increased; it diminished; it burst forth at last with new fervor, and a settled radiance has now spread around, which every century augments, and which the course of nature promises to perpetuate.

The same accidents have occurred to the British poetry. The Druids had, as Cæsar attests, a great quantity of verses, and of course had poets, whose names and productions have perished for ever. Of all those who were afterwards distinguished, during the Roman residence, little else than a few names remain. In the sixth century, some poets of eminent genius shone, whose works have come down to us. Of those who flourished in the seventh,

eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, we know little, and have very few remains; yet we can ascertain, that bards then both lived and sang. At last, in the twelfth century, the genius of Welsh poetry broke out in new lustre, which increased through the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. But, for the last two ages, what has become of it? Another chasm has taken place, like that between the sixth and the twelfth, of which we are living witnesses.

To complete the argument in behalf of these poems; there remains only to show, that the forgery could not have been practised without detection; that there is nothing extraordinary in these poems being genuine; that they are attested by a stream of national belief, and that any scepticism about them has been of recent origin.

Of these four points, the two last are so notorious, that I shall only assert them without the fear of contradiction; very little need be added on the others. Whoever considers the nature of the bardic system; that no one was admitted to be a bard but after a regular initiation and tuition, and that so many bards, in every age, existed competitors for fame and distinction, must perceive that so much poetry, as to occupy 580 pages of double columns, could not be forged without speedy detection.

We have proved by undeniable evidence and reasoning, that the Welsh had bards in the sixth century, and in particular these individual bards. Is it then any thing extraordinary that poets should write poetry; and if poetry was written, is it a miracle that part of it should descend to us? Let us recollect, that the insignificant tract of Gildas has survived, and let us cease to be surprised that a nation, fond of its bards, should preserve some of their compositions.

END OF THE VINDICATION.

# ESSAY

ON THE

# ANTIQUITY OF RIME IN EUROPE.

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It has been lately asserted, that "the *only* opinions which now divide the learned on this subject, are, whether the use of rime originated from the Saracens, who took possession of Sicily in the year 828, or arose among the Italian monks in the eighth century."[1]

Both these opinions may be shown to be incorrect; a few facts will prove that rime was much earlier in existence. It is also declared to be "*certain* that it was totally unknown to the ancient languages of Europe."[2] This opinion is as erroneous as the others.

The most important specimen of rime, between the years 800 and 900, is Otfrid's Paraphrase on the Gospels, written in the Franco-theotisc language. The author lived in the middle of the century. It occupies 380 folio pages, and is all in rime, generally very exact. The work will be found in the first volume of Schilter's Thesaurus. It was originally printed by Flacius, Basil, 1571. 8vo.

There is extant a letter of Otfrid to Leutbert, archbishop of Mentz, prefixed to his paraphrase, in which he explains his reasons for undertaking this work. He says, that some worthy persons, offended at the obscene songs of the laics, had particularly requested him to write part of the Gospels in the vernacular Theotisc language, that the singing of this might supersede the others. They told him that many heathen poets, as Virgil, Lucan, and others, had written much in their native language, while the Frankish nation had been very tardy in expressing the divine word in its own tongue. Otfrid adds, that, impelled by this importunity, he had composed a part of the Gospels in the Frankish language, that they, who had dreaded the difficulty of a foreign tongue, might read the sacred word in their own.

If these were the motives of Otfrid in this composition, is it not most probable that it was not only written in the vernacular language, but in the popular form of his nation? If rime had not

[1] Critical Review, Jan. 1800, p. 22.

[2] Ibid.

been a great companion of Frankish poetry, is it likely that he who wrote a poetical work to supersede the use of their popular songs, would have composed it in rime? If rime had been then a novelty in France, would he not in this letter have apologized for introducing it into the Franco-theotisc language? Would he not have given his reasons for departing from its popular style? On the contrary, he expresses himself as if he had composed his work in the usual poetical form of his countrymen.

Indeed, that rime was the usual companion of their poetry seems to be clearly deducible from another of his phrases. In describing the peculiarities of the Franco-theotisc language, he says, "it perpetually seeks rime." "Schæma omoeteleuton assidue quærit." This remarkable expression seems to me to have the force that rime was much in use in its poetry; for certainly the Franco-theotisc language is not so peculiarly musical, as to seek or tend to rime more than any other.

Otfrid's aim was popularity. But if the Francs had not used rime, he could have reached his aim more certainly by using the ancient metres of his country, than by the difficult labour of writing so large a work in rime. I should also conceive, that if rime had then been a novelty in the Frankish language, Otfrid could have scarcely used it with so much ease and perfection. Yet, though his work has no fewer than 380 pages, it exhibits the use of Frankish rime in a remarkably easy, fluent, and harmonious manner.

There is another proof that rime was an appurtenance of ancient Frankish poetry. In the life of St. Faron, bishop of Meaux[1], which was written by Hildegarius, another bishop, who lived in the same century with Otfrid, the successes of Chlotarius the Second, against the Saxons in the year 622, are mentioned. The author adds, "on this victory a public song (juxta rusticitatem), in the rustic manner, was in every one's mouth, the women joining in the chorus."

He then gives this extract from the song which we shall find to be rime:

> "De Chlotario est canere rege Franconum,
> Qui ivit pugnare in gentem Saxonum,
> Quam graviter provenisset missis Saxonum,
> Si non fuisset inclytus Faro de gente Burgundionum."

He adds, that at the end of the song was,

> "Quando veniunt missi Saxonum in terra Francorum,
> Faro ubi erat princeps——
> Instinctu Dei transeunt per urbem Meldorum
> Ne interficiantur a rege Francorum."

After these quotations he says: "We choose to show (rustico carmine), in rustic verse, how famous he was deemed."

This rustic verse we see was rimed verse. Does not this confirm

[1] See it in Bouquet's Recueil, v. iii. p. 505.

the inference I have made from Otfrid, that rime was an appendage of the popular poetry of this people? This song was made in the year 622.[1]

Another instance tempts me to suspect that rime was not unknown to the ancient languages of Europe. The ancient song, once so popular in Gothland, which narrates the emigration of the Lombards, and which ends with their humiliation by Charlemagne, is thus mentioned by Stephanius: "Among the inhabitants of Gothland, a very ancient song was formerly sung in rime in their vernacular language, in which the circumstances concerning the emigration of the Lango-bardi are celebrated more truly and accurately than by Paulus Diaconus." He afterwards says, "from the last verse it may be understood that this song was made after the close of the Lombard empire, while Charlemagne was reigning so extensively in Germany and Italy." Charlemagne died in 814. This poem is in exact riming couplets, of which the first may be adduced as a specimen:

"Ebbe oc Aage de Hellede fro
Siden de for hunger aff skaane dro."[2]

If this song was written at the close of the eighth century, as Stephanius intimates, I presume it was in the customary style of the national poetry. The vernacular poetry of every country more commonly follows ancient rules and forms than it adopts new, unusual, and difficult modes.

That rime arose among the Italian monks of the eighth century, will be found an untenable opinion, if we inspect the works of those who wrote poetry in that and the preceding centuries.

The first that may be mentioned is Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon missionary, who went to convert the uncivilized Germans, and who perished about the year 755. He closes a letter to Nithard with fourteen riming couplets. I will cite the two first as a specimen:[3]

"Vale fratres florentibus
Juventutis cum viribus
Ut floreas cum domino
In sempiterno solio."

One of his correspondents, Leobgytha, also uses them. She ends a letter to Boniface with four riming lines. She says she learnt the art from Eadburga, his pupil.[4] Cona, another of his correspondents, adds to a letter to Lullus, six hexameters, which rime in the middle.[5]

Before Boniface lived Aldhelm, one of the bishops of the West Saxons. He was most highly esteemed by his countrymen as a

[1] It was remarked by Pelloutier in his History of the Celts.
[2] Stephanius in Saxonem, 181.
[3] 16 Magna Bib. Pat. p. 49.
[4] Ibid. p. 62.
[5] Ibid. p. 91.

poet. His death is placed in 709, and therefore his works properly belong to the preceding century, because in that he must have principally lived. Lullus, the contemporary of Boniface, says to a friend, "I pray you to direct to me some little works of bishop Aldhelm, either of prose, metre, or rime." (Seu prosarum, seu metrorum, seu rythmicorum.)[1]

Whether either of the long riming poems annexed to Boniface's letters, and which have at the end the words "finit carmen Aldhelmi,"[2] were written by Aldhelm, I will not determine; but the three lines, which Simon of Durham quotes from him, rime in the middle.[3] The two lines which Ducange cites[4] from his treatise De octo Vitiis, are a rimed couplet. The verses which he made at Rome, and which are given by Malmsbury[5], contain several rimes, as well as some lines which do not rime. I can only speak of his poems by these fragments, because I have not seen any of his whole poems, of which some are yet extant.

But we have Aldhelm's own evidence that rime was used in his time. On looking into his prose treatise on Virginity, I perceived that he had two riming couplets, which he expressly calls rime. His words are, "ut non inconvenienter CARMINE RYTHMICO dici queat," 'as may be expressed, not unsuitably, in rimed verse.'[6] The verses are:

"Christus passus patibulo
Atque læti latibulo
Virginem virgo virgini
Commendabat tutamini."

Here is a very striking example of rime in an author, who chiefly lived in the seventh century. It may be suspected from the introductory words "dici queat," that they are of Aldhelm's own composition, written in a momentary whim of making a rime. The same caprice seems to have seized him in several other parts of this little treatise, for rimes often occur in it, as p. 342., p. 344., p. 362., and in other places. See also another specimen of his rime, quoted in p. 325. of this volume on the Anglo-Saxons, which also exhibit a poem of Bede, of which the first parts is in rime, p. 328.

Other authors of the seventh century have rime. Eugenius was a Spanish bishop who died 657. His little poem on the inventors of letter is in rime.[7] In his poem on Old Age, rime is also frequent. Sometimes, as in the beginning of it, the rimes are alternate; sometimes they are triplets; sometimes couplets. It

[1] 16 Magna Bib. Pat. p. 51.
[2] Ibid. p. 75. Edit. Paris, 1654.
[3] Twisden's decem Script. p. 112.
[4] 1 Gloss. Med. Lat. p. 923.
[5] 3 Gale's Script. p. 343.
[6] P. 297. Wharton's Edition. This use of rime by Aldhelm had not been remarked before.
[7] Published in Rivinius Pat. Hispan. Lips. 1656.

has also several middle rimes. His Monosticha on the Plagues of Egypt has also much rime. [1]

Drepanius Florus was another poet of this century who used rime. He lived about 650. His Paraphrase of the twenty-seventh Psalm consists of stanzas of four lines. Some of these are partly rimed.[2] The two following are wholly so:

"Audi precantis anxia
Pater super me murmura
Dum templa cœli ad ardua
Elata tollo brachia.

"Hic namque virtus inclita
Plebis beatæ premia:
Hic ipse Christo proflua
Servat salutis gaudia."

His poem De Cereo Paschali contains fifty lines, of which seventeen rime at the end, and sixteen in the middle.[3]

To the beginning of this century belongs the rimed poem of another author, as he is placed by Usher[4] and Fabricius.[5] He is Columbanus the Irishman. There have been more than one either of the same name or of one very similar. But the person who was an abbot in Gaul, and afterwards in Italy, died in 615, according to Fabricius. He was the author of a few poems which have been oftentimes printed. The structure of some is singular and capricious. The one with which I am concerned consists of forty-one rimed couplets of Latin verse.

Leyser says, "it does not seem to be of this age." He gives no reasons for his opinion. I presume the rime was one cause of his doubt, and its not having appeared before Usher, and its being unknown to Goldastus, who published the poems of Columbanus, were other causes of scepticism. The rime, however, can be no objection, because I have already proved that rime was used in this age. As to Goldastus not knowing it, the facts are, that Goldastus did publish it, without knowing that he did so; I mean without knowing it to be a poem. After the poetry of Columbanus, Goldastus edited two of his letters, as he called and thought them; one of which is the rimed poem in question. It is curious, that neither Goldastus, Usher, Leyser, nor Fabricius, discerned

[1] Masdeu gives a funeral inscription in Spain of the 7th century in Rime.

Parva dicata Deo
permansit corpore virgo,
hic sursum rapta
cœlesti migrat in aulâ.
obiit junias
decimo quartave calendas
hic est querulis
æra de tempore martis.

Quoted in Dr. Dunham's History of Spain and Portugal, vol. i. p. 221.

[2] 16 Mag. Bib. p. 738.
[3] Ibid. p. 729.
[4] Vet. Epist. Hib. p. 7.
[5] Bib. Med. Lat. i. p. 1125.

that this letter of Columbanus was a poem. Usher says the bishop of Kilmore first remarked it to him. This is surprising, as it is very exactly rimed. Goldastus therefore actually published it in 1604, among his Paræneticí Veteres.[1]

But where did Goldastus get it? He informs us: "We saw two copies of this in the library of our monastery: one of good antiquity (bene antiquum)., but anonymous; another copy, not less ancient, but far preferable in this respect, that it expressed the author's name."[2]

Goldastus also published with it another short composition, which he says he took from a very old MS. communicated to him by the superior of the Abbey of St. Gall, intitled, "Incipit Epistula Sci. Columbani." This, though not professedly in rime, yet, like Aldhelm's work, has much rime interspersed in it, as

"Quæ quotidie fugis
Et quotidie venis;
Quæ veniendo fugis,
Et fugiendo venis;
Dissimilis eventu
Similis ortu
Dissimilis luxu
Similis fluxu."

In some other passages, words of like endings seem to be purposely placed together, which Aldhelm's example entitles us to say, was done by a mind acquainted with rime.[3]

It will be fair to say that this letter, the rimed poem, and the other poetry of Columbanus, have great identity of subject and thought, which favours the idea that they belong to one author.

Leyser places the death of Columbanus in 598, or 595; Fabricius in 615. On either computation he belongs more to the sixth century than the seventh.

But we can adduce another evidence that rime was used in the sixth century: I mean Venantius Fortunatus, the bishop of Poitou. He was a very fertile poet. In 565 he celebrated the nuptials of Sigebert and Brunechild, and died about 600. One of his poems is a Hymn to the Baptized, published by Martene in his De Antiquis Ecclesiæ Ritibus, from a MS. of the cathedral church of Poitou. Fabricius has reprinted it in his Bibliotheca Mediæ Latinitatis, t. ii. 544. As it belongs to a period so early, I will give the three first stanzas;

"Tibi laus perennis auctor
Baptismatis sacrator
Qui sorte passionis
Das præmium salutis.

[1] P. 146. It is in its poetic shape in Usher's Sylloge Epist. Hib. p. 9.
[2] Goldastus, p. 153. [3] See it in Goldastus, p. 143.; in Usher, p. 7.

" Nox clara plus et alma
Quam luna sol et astra
Quæ luminum corona
Reddis diem per umbram
Tibi laus.

" Dulcis, sacrata, blanda,
Electa, pura, pulchra
Sudans honore mella
Rigans odore chrisma
Tibi laus."

There is also another poem of this author handed down to us, which is in rime. It is an Elegy on Leontius. I quote it from the Bibliotheca Magna Patrum of Paris, tom. viii. p. 776. It has twenty-three stanzas, of four lines each. The three first stanzas are :

" Agnoscat omne seculum
Antistitem Leontium
Burdegalense præmium
Dono superno redditum.

" Bilinguis, ore callido
Crimen fovebat invidum
Ferens acerbum nuncium,
Hunc jam sepulcro conditum.

" Celare se non pertulit,
Qui triste funus edidit,
Et si nocere desiit
Insana vota prodidit."

As this author usually affected the classical metres, which appear to have stood highest in estimation in all Latin poetry, we must not expect many of his poems to be rimed. He gives us, however, abundant indications of a mind acquainted with rime, and occasionally indulging the propensity to use it. His Quatrain to bishop Felix is rimed.[1] In another poem of twenty-two lines, eight are rimed couplets.[2] In four others alternate lines are rimed, as in some of our stanzas, and five have middle rimes.

In one of his poems on Lupus, the first four lines have three rimes in *as ;* the second four lines have three rimes in *us ;* and the third four lines have three rimes in *is.* The rest of the poem contains also much rime in every four lines. Half of the lines of this poem are also rimed in the middle.

In several others of his poems, rimes apparently intentional and sought for may be noticed.

The use of rime has been now traced up to the middle of the sixth century. And in reaching this period, it is impossible I can

[1] Bib. Mag. p. 785. [2] Bib. Mag. p. 780.

forget that contemporary with Fortunatus were the Welsh Bards whom I have mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon History, Taliesin, Aneurin, Myrzin, and Llywarch Hên.

The works of these bards have been just printed in their original language in the Archaiology of Wales, by some very public-spirited Welshmen. I understand that a copy has been presented to this society. On referring to them, gentlemen will find that these poems are also in rime.

When I first became acquainted with these valuable and venerable remains, I intimated that they made a new theory of the origin of rime necessary. I was answered, that their use of rime was a decisive proof that they were supposititious. This assertion was seconded by those I have already alluded to, that rime was unknown to the ancient languages of Europe, and that the *only* questions now were, whether the use of rime originated with the Saracens, who took possession of Sicily in 828, or among theItalian monks in the eighth century. If these assertions were just, of course the authenticity of the Welsh Bards was shaken. I had myself no desire to support them if they were forgeries, and therefore applied myself to examine ancient works, to discover when rime really began to be used in Europe. In this paper I have traced it to the very century in which the Welsh Bards lived. I will not pursue it higher now, that I may not intrude too long onthe patience of this indulgent society. At another opportunit I will beg permission to state what has occurred to me on the use of rime before the sixth century. It may be also curious to enquire if it was at all known to the Greeks and Romans, and what are the most reasonable conclusions as to its origin in Europe.[1]

[1] The essay on the last topics may be seen in the Archaiologia, vol. xiv. p. 187. These two essays were read before the Society of Antiquaries, on the 21st and 28th of January, and the 24th of June, 1802. In the last I quoted the poem of St. Austin, against the Donatists, which consists of 270 lines, all riming in *e*. He was born in 354, and died in 430. He states, that he wrote it to be remembered and sung among the vulgar. This makes it probable that the Romans used rimes in their vulgar ballads. This poem of St. Austin, and the preceding quotation from Aldhelm, overthrow the former opinions, that rime originated from the Arabs, or from the Italian monks of the eighth century. The second essay exhibited riming instances of the homoio teleuton in the Greek and Roman writers on rhetoric, and some passages in Homer, Ennius, Epicharmus, Eubulus, and Hegesander Delphus, which seem like intentional rimes. Hebrew rimed passages in Job were also noticed. Arch. vol. xiv. p. 187.

I will add here a specimen of Chinese rime and poetry, which I have observed as I was revising the fifth edition of this history, taken from their ancient book the She-king.

Fa muh chang chang,
Neaou ming yang yang,
Ch'huh tsze yew kuh
Tscen yu k'heaou muh;
Yang k'he ming e;
Kew khe yew shing;

Seang pe neaou e,
Yew kew yew shing,
Chin e jin e,
Puh kew yew sang,
Shin che ting che
Chung ho ts'heay ping.

In felling a tree, the axes of many resound:
The birds of the wood sing in reiterated notes to their fellows;
They issue forth from shady retreats in the valleys;
They remove to the groves, and perch in groups upon the lofty trees.
To each other they chirp in responses;
These are the sounds by which friends are invited.
Observe those birds;
Even they have a voice to invoke friendship.
Shall it then be that men
Desire not the society of living friends?
The Gods listen with pleasure to those
Who continue to the end in harmony and peace. DR. MORRISON

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